

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 7

November, 1925

Number 11

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

Notes of the Month

AFTER LIVERPOOL

Towards Socialism or Towards Capitalism ?

By L. TROTSKY

Scarborough and Liverpool

By P. BRAUN

Getting Mosul into Perspective

By W. N. EWER

The Drive into the Factories

By J. T. MURPHY

The World of Labour

Published at

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD, LONDON, S.W. 1

P R I C E S I X P E N C E

TRADE UNION UNITY

*A Magazine of
International Trade Unionism*



TWOPENCE MONTHLY



Editorial Board :

A. A. PURCELL (President of the International
Federation of Trade Unions).

EDO FIMMEN (Secretary of the International
Transport Workers' Federation).

GEORGE HICKS (Executive Member, sub., of the
International Federation of Trade Unions).



162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD, LONDON, S.W. 1

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

VOLUME 7

NOVEMBER, 1925

NUMBER 11

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

CONTENTS

Notes of the Month - - - - Page 641

AFTER LIVERPOOL

Towards Socialism or Towards Capitalism ? - „ 659

By L. TROTSKY

Scarborough and Liverpool - - - „ 667

By P. BRAUN

Getting Mosul into Perspective - - - „ 679

By W. N. EWER

The Drive into the Factories - - - „ 692

By J. T. MURPHY

The World of Labour - - - „ 699

International—Trade Union Unity

Published at

162 Buckingham Palace Road

London

S.W.1

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : VICTORIA 9193.

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him, or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

1925 : Reduced Subscription Rates

[PAID IN ADVANCE]

British Isles :

One year - 7/- Six months - 3/6

Abroad :

One year 8/- or \$2.00 Six months 4/- or \$1.00

American Subscription Representative :—Philip Novick, 2710 Sedgwick Avenue, Bronx, New York, N.Y., U.S.A.

Advertisement Rates on application.

Volume VI (January to December, 1924) can be supplied for 10s. 6d. post free, or these numbers can be bound and returned post free for 4s. 6d.

Cases can be supplied for 3s. 6d. post free.

Title Page for Volume VI can be had on application if 1½d. for postage is sent.

A complete set of Bound Volumes can be supplied for £2 10s. 0d.

NOTES of the MONTH

Old Forms and New Struggles—Dead Relics—Scarborough versus Liverpool—The Left Wing at Liverpool—The last Parade of the Old Guard—Bourgeois Attacks Ahead—Civil War and Common Sense—The Economics of Mr. Cramp—The Logic of Mr. Cramp—Penny Wise—Civil War as a Scapegoat—Plain Practical Issues—Splitting the Working Class—“Clear Out”—Bourgeois Aims—Left Wing Next—A Coalition Government?—The Next Labour Government—A Law and Order Government—MacDonald Fears a Labour Majority—Programme and Policy—Left Wing Unity—The Lesson of Liverpool.

IN the social structure of Great Britain, all the existing institutions and organisations are built on the stability of Capitalism. Only the force of events is driving to Revolution. The policy of the bourgeoisie has always been traditionally a liberal policy at home (accompanied by violent conquest abroad) ; the policy of the organised working-class movement has been equally liberal, *i.e.*, accepting the stable capitalist framework and attempting by reforms within it to achieve material improvements in conditions. But on this seemingly stable system has come violent economic unsettlement, itself the working out of the capitalist order. The basis of British exploitation of the world has weakened, owing to the rise of new powers, and begun to contract. The result is a situation of intense and growing conflict at home. The bourgeois peaceful policy is, in fact, ended : capitalists and working class are compelled to organise, more and more openly, for struggle with all their forces. But alongside this reality of growing struggle the old shell of Liberal forms still persists ; and the bourgeoisie is able to use this old shell—Parliamentarism, the old “constitutional” Trade Union and Labour tradition, &c.—to disorganise the working-class front. This is what happened at the Labour Party Conference at Liverpool.

FROM the process of sudden and violent change which is taking place in Britain arises a complete contradiction between appearances and reality in social and political life. The old forms still persist : Parliament still appears to function, though more and more remotely and perfunctorily, the interplay of parties to determine politics, democratic suffrage to provide the expression of the popular will, the Trade Unions to perform their economic rôle of collective bargaining in the existing system, and all the rest of it. But the reality, as everyone more or less realises, is an extremely concentrated capitalist oligarchy, working through a very powerful State machine, and controlling an elaborate Press as the principal organ of popularising its rule, confronted with a growing, confused, but steadily advancing power of the organised working class. The real political crises are no longer the fate of a Bill or a Budget or a Parliamentary vote, but a confrontation of the Cabinet and the General Council. However, constitutional writers continue to write in the old terms.

THE same contradiction is seen in the working-class movement. All the forms, the organisations, the general character of the programmes, belong to the old pre-war conditions, to the outlook of the once sheltered aristocracy of labour, to the confidence of stable advance and security. But the whole force of the working class, under the overmastering pressure of actual conditions, is pushing forward to something very different, to more and more desperate struggles against worsening conditions and to more and more revolutionary struggles. The force of the working class is compelling and hammering at the old forms to conform to its new needs, is compelling the Trade Unions to take on new and unwonted shapes, and even the Labour Party (as in 1920) to appear in revolutionary guise. At Scarborough, where the less rigid political outlook of the Trade Unions made an advance easier, the awakening force of the working class was able to make a powerful impression. At Liverpool, where all the outposts of the old capitalist control in the working-class movement were strategically concentrated, the strength of the old machine to resist change was demonstrated. The decisions of Scarborough and of Liverpool are contradictory in the logical sense, but in fact they are com-

plementary. Scarborough and Liverpool together constitute a very good picture of the existing stage of transition of the working-class movement.

LIVERPOOL is not in any sense an ebbing of the left revolutionary tide. It is, on the contrary, a very strong evidence of the existencé of that tide. For the fact that it was found necessary to concentrate so much time and attention and energy, more than at any previous Conference, to dealing with the revolutionary issue (which, as Mr. Henderson justly and plaintively remarked, had been already "settled" every year for the past three years) is sufficient evidence of the reality of that issue. All the more so in that it was found necessary to bring the whole combined force of the capitalist machine and Press, as never before, in support of the Right Wing leaders. What Liverpool showed was not the weakness of the revolutionary issue—that is, of the rising revolutionary temper of the masses in response to the rising revolutionary situation—which more and more clearly dominates all working-class politics to-day, but the weakness of the existing Left Wing leadership, which has endeavoured to reflect the new issue and the new forces. The Left Wing leaders in the Trade Unions, who had taken a prominent part at Scarborough, failed even to attempt to put up a fight under the harder conditions at Liverpool. The Left Wing leaders in the Labour Party also played a negligible rôle. On central questions of policy, on which they had made public professions of faith during the previous twelve months, all the most prominent Left Wing leaders alike failed to raise either voice or finger in support of their opinions. They allowed themselves to be mustered in complete unchallenged unity with the most reactionary decisions of the Conference and the whole economic, social and political policy of MacDonald. This failure reflects the political uncertainty and lack of self-confidence of the Left Wing. It is a failure which is very serious in its immediate consequences for the working-class movement, and to overcome this weakness is an essential task for the future. Once again is illustrated the statement that it is not the Trade Unions as economic organs which govern or can govern politics, but that politics—either bourgeois Liberal politics or revolutionary politics

—must and always will lead the Trade Unions, and that the political field is the supreme battleground. The moment that the Trade Union Left weakened their association with Communism they fell under complete subjection to MacDonaldism. They could not, in the nature of things, put forward an alternative of their own. Between the two political faiths the future battle lies. The Left Wing must reach a stronger political foundation, cohesion and self-discipline, political courage and political leadership.

LIVERPOOL was the answer of the bourgeoisie to Red Friday. On Red Friday, for a moment, the workers were united ; the bourgeoisie at once made a temporary retreat. At Liverpool the working-class forces let themselves be broken ; the Stock Exchange and the whole capitalist Press at once acclaimed the victory. It is doubtful if in the whole history of the Labour Party there has been a campaign so completely and openly instigated, led and generalised by the whole combined forces of the capitalists, with the Right Wing leaders so visibly as only their agents and mouthpieces. Liverpool was in fact a calling up of the last reserves to meet the new forces that, from the facts of the existing economic and political situation, are shaking the old Labour movement and threatening the old secure capitalist control. It was a registering of the whole force of the inherited machine of the Trade Union bureaucracy against the rising working-class revolt. It was a registering which certainly happened in its present form for the last time. The demonstration is over. Does anyone believe that the realities of the situation are changed ?

LET us estimate the position as it exists after Liverpool. The bourgeoisie is anxious to inflict a crushing defeat on the working-class movement. They are compelled to attempt this by the facts of the economic situation. They know that the economic crisis, which is in fact getting worse, cannot be met within capitalism save by lowering the costs of production, that is attacking the position of the workers. They know that, in view of the experience of the past five years, they will meet with a heavier and more united resistance from the workers than ever before, and that the intensification of the conflict is inevitably raising the

political and revolutionary consciousness of the workers. They therefore know that they must prepare for a heavy conflict of a type not previously experienced, for which they may need to bring up all their forces, economic, political, legal—and illegal—and military. They are making these preparations very openly and busily. At the same time, it is equally part of the bourgeois preparations to endeavour to break up the working-class front in every way beforehand. To achieve this they have two methods of attack. The first is the direct attack from outside—the campaign of Joynson-Hicks, supported by special legislation and the police—against “sedition.” The second is the attack from inside—the campaign of MacDonald, supported by Rothermere and Beaverbrook, against “extremism.” The policy of the first attack is a policy of direct suppression. The policy of the second attack is a policy of splits and expulsions. The combined effect of both is to break the back of the movement before the fight. It is only necessary to note the expressions of the responsible organs of the Press immediately after Liverpool, and the direct incitement to the expulsion not only of individuals but of whole local Labour Parties, Trade Union branches, and even Trade Unions, to see the character of the bourgeois campaign.

AT this point, what is the leadership of the existing Labour Party Executive to the movement? The official leadership offered, as in Cramp’s opening address to the Conference, is a warning against civil war, as unlikely to lead to material benefits, and an advocacy of peaceful methods. What then of the preparations of the bourgeoisie? No reference is made to these. What of the coming struggle? This is left out of view. What is the working-class movement to do if it should find the doubtful protection of legality, in which it has placed all its trust, break in two in the hour of trial? No answer is given. On the morrow of the Conference, Mr. MacDonald, fresh from his triumphs in the cause of Constitutional Democracy, found himself obliged to write to *The Times* in protest against the Home Office’s direct sanction and support of the notorious O.M.S. And no doubt, when the whole working-class movement is feeling the blows of the full weight of the capitalist machine, legal and illegal, both Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Cramp will write letters of protest to *The Times*. But by that

time the working-class movement will have had opportunity to judge the practical value of a leadership which, in a crisis like the present, contents itself with preaching Sunday school wisdom on the evils of civil war instead of dealing with the actual struggle of the working class. The blessings of peace are an admirable theme, and no doubt in the last Imperialist war Mr. Cramp was only prevented by the urgency of his other duties from giving more active expression to the faith he now professes ; but, at the moment when the whole bourgeoisie is preparing war, then to come forward with sudden eagerness to preach pacifism to the working class means a very different thing.

MR. CRAMP argues that Great Britain is economically dependent upon other countries and, therefore, cannot risk a catastrophic break. The economic dependence is correct, and in its present exaggerated form is the outcome of the advanced capitalist process, which has sacrificed national development to the interests of Imperialism. But the same capitalist development which has led to this situation is also now breaking it. The old basis of world monopoly and exploitation is crumbling and cracking in every direction, and the catastrophic break which Mr. Cramp fears is most certain to come if capitalist development is allowed to continue. The reconstruction that is necessary cannot take place within the capitalist framework, as the complete breakdown of the ambitious Lloyd George schemes after the war (considerably more ambitious, as well as more energetically striven for, than the present Labour Party programme) bears witness. Only the Revolution, which Mr. Cramp fears, can bring about the solution of the impasse in which Great Britain is placed. Mr. Cramp, who has studied at the Labour College, may remember having read, in the course of his studies, how capitalism in its decline produces conditions of economic collapse and decay from which no measures of reform, but only the strong hand of the revolution, can find a way of re-organising the economic structure. He should not now, when he is face to face with this collapse in actual experience, shrink back from it in terror, forget all his lessons and run back to Mother Capitalism for protection, instead of seeing the plain revolutionary moral that it reveals.

IN a characteristic statement, Mr. Cramp argues that a "revolution of force" to be "justified" must "increase material well-being." He does not make clear whether he means an eventual increase in national well-being, such as a Socialist revolution by the release and re-direction of the productive forces inevitably must bring, or, as he appears to imply by the context, an immediate increase in material well-being in the midst of conditions of civil war. If he means the latter, his argument can only be compared to an argument that a man should not put out a fire in his house until he is convinced that he will be richer at the end of the whole affair than he was at the beginning, and that otherwise he is not "justified" in putting it out. We may assure Mr. Cramp that the British people, like every other people that has to go through the furnace, will probably be poorer at the immediate end of the revolutionary struggle than before it—though nothing like as poor as they will become under capitalism if they do not face the struggle. But just as the Russian workers, after all their sufferings, are already to-day, alone of all the workers of the world, on the up-grade of material well-being, so the workers of the other countries, all the more rapidly by reason of the previous success of the Russian workers and also of the more advanced stage of economic development, will be able to replace the material loss of the revolutionary struggle by material advance once the victory is won. The shirking of the struggle, on the other hand, leads only to the impoverishment of capitalist decay.

IT is indeed a characteristic argument, redolent of the whole viewpoint of the old aristocracy of labour from whose tradition Mr. Cramp has come, to put forward an immediate temporary "improvement of material well-being" in the scale against the whole struggle of the working class. Three hundred and eighty million coloured workers live in subjection to autocratic British rule, ground down to the lowest level of "material well-being" (compared to which the condition of the British worker still is luxury) waiting for the action of the British workers to break their chains. But that day must wait for the three hundred and eighty millions until there is a guarantee to the already better off British minority of an immediate "improvement in material well-being."

Here is revealed, in all its nakedness, the outlook of the old aristocracy of labour, which sacrificed the whole struggle of the working class for the sake of an infinitesimal sectional benefit, and by so doing cut itself off from the international working class. The sufferings of the British workers to-day from the collapse of the Empire are only part of the paying of the price for the crimes of the old opportunist leadership against the working class.

BUT the question is not a question of "for" or "against" civil war. Nobody wants civil war. Nevertheless civil wars happen when a conflict of social forces reaches a certain point. The history of England is no exception to this rule, any more than any other country. The long period since the last civil war in England is simply a reflection of the long period of bourgeois ascendancy in England, which has now reached its decline. The question of Parliamentarism and coercion, of "reason" and "force," is not an absolute question, to be settled by a vote at a conference. Every class system rests upon force, and the capitalist system in Britain is based upon a very considerable apparatus of force. It is only on the basis of that apparatus, and within its limits, that "discussion" is allowed; the moment that apparatus itself is questioned, the whole machinery of violence and coercion will be put into operation against you. During periods when the class struggle is not acute, the province of Parliamentary forms or "discussion" is relatively large, because no fundamental issues are raised; as soon as it becomes more acute the province becomes restricted and, at a certain stage, abolished altogether and replaced by dictatorship. The question of proximity to peaceful discussion or civil war is therefore precisely a question of the stage of working-class advance and capitalist dissolution. The working class, which is the sole pacific force in the world, will have to face the successive conditions of the struggle as those conditions develop. The workers are the last to wish for any measures of violence and suffer the most; but they will have to overcome the opposition of the bourgeoisie, and they will have eventually to challenge and overcome the apparatus of bourgeois violence, and the bourgeoisie will be too skilful to allow them to do this from the convenient vantage point of bourgeois legality.

THE immediate question, however, is not yet a question of these ultimate issues. It is a question of the immediate struggle facing the working class and the best way of meeting it. This is not met by abstract disquisitions on the evils of civil war or the dependence of the British people on the export trade. The bourgeoisie is making very definite preparations. They are threatening special legislation against the Labour movement. They are organising, under various forms and under semi-official control, large bodies of disciplined blacklegs, street-fighters, &c., openly for use against the working class. They are preparing, according to prominent and responsible Labour Party leaders, the use of the military against the workers. The situation calls for certain plain measures of self-defence by the working-class movement, which can be agreed on by all, apart from any discussion about ultimate issues. It is necessary to prepare the greatest possible unity of action of the whole movement under a centralised lead. It is necessary to conduct a campaign of propaganda which shall familiarise the issues of the coming struggle throughout the country. It is necessary to prepare against legal and other attacks upon the movement (which will begin always in a piecemeal fashion and only against "extremists") by closing the whole ranks of the movement and bringing its whole force to bear against any attack in any quarter. It is necessary to prepare in the localities for Workers' Defence and to organise peaceful propaganda in the forces for the workers' cause. All these are plain tasks on which there can be, and needs to be, plenty of concrete useful discussion. But when a responsible leadership meets a situation like the present only with a repetition of capitalist bogey talk about the menace of revolution and, at the same time, instead of taking a single step to organise the movement, proceeds to carry out (again in absolute unity with the capitalist campaign) a policy of splits and expulsions within the movement, then that leadership is simply playing the bourgeois game.

THE policy that the Right Wing is pursuing is in fact splitting the movement. As this is likely to become a cardinal issue in the near future, it is necessary to make clear why this is so, and why the Right Wing policy inevitably means a splitting of the movement on a scale hardly yet guessed at by

most people in this country. It is often argued that Communists and Left Wingers who hold views at variance with the existing policy of the Labour Party should leave the Party and propagate their views outside. This is a very superficial suggestion, which could only be put forward by one who has completely broken with the whole conception of the working-class movement. Now every Socialist and Marxist knows that the struggle of Socialism is not the struggle of an isolated section, but of the organised working class, and that the task of the Socialist is to win the working class as an organised force for the Socialist struggle. The Communists, therefore, who make it their aim to endeavour to win over the mass of the organised working class for the struggle are acting correctly. But the Right Wing leaders who, instead of meeting them on this basis and fighting point by point within the working-class movement, endeavour to maintain their position by expulsions are smashing the working-class movement for the sake of their own notions.

HOW will it work out in practice? Mr. MacDonald says :—
 Liverpool has laid down the charter of the Labour Party, and those who are not to respect it had better clear out.

Here we have it plain and clear. For the sake of this petty programme of small Liberal reforms and Imperialist illusions, which the Right Wing leadership has temporarily fastened upon the movement, and which has no more real meaning and permanence in the life of the movement than the Imperialist resolutions of the time of war-fever, for the sake of this, the existing stage of working-class unity and consciousness, which has been built up through the Labour Party, is to be cheerfully smashed. Do revolutionary workers who have given their lives to the building up of the movement protest against this abandonment of Socialism? Let them "clear out." Do Trade Union branches and local Labour Parties venture on opposition and dare to stand on the unity of the working class front? Let them be expunged and "re-organised," as it has already been attempted to "re-organise" local Labour Parties, no longer on the basis of the organised working class in the locality, but on the basis of perhaps one "loyal" branch, and for the remainder a middle-class membership. Does a Trade

Union reach a revolutionary outlook, as many of them are within a few stages of doing? Let them "clear out." Is it not clear that what is happening is, not the clarification of the basis of a particular party, but the smashing and disorganisation of the whole working-class movement? And is it not clear that, as the inevitable advance of the working-class proceeds, the disorganisation will reach larger and larger proportions?

BUT this policy of counter-revolutionary splits and expulsions plays straight into the hands of the Government and the bourgeoisie. The language of the bourgeois Press shows their aim clearly enough :—

The future of the Labour Party—even its existence as a party of power in the councils of the state—depends upon the resolutions of the Executive being made effective not only in local Labour Party organisations but throughout the Trade Unions as well . . . This would be more than a Party achievement. It would be a definite gain for England.—*The Times*, September 29, 1925.

If these resolutions are carried, Labour will have nailed its colours—it could hardly do otherwise—to the Parliamentary mast. Its breach with the Minority Movement in the Trade Unions will be complete. The battle is thus joined and likely to be vigorous.—*Observer*, September 7, 1925.

Clearest of all is the *The Times* leader "From Words to Deeds" on the morrow of the Conference decision—a typical piece of bourgeois statesmanship :—

The Party has made a great and welcome affirmation . . . But these resolutions do not end the matter . . . The declarations of the Conference will in due course have to be transformed into acts . . . The main difficulty is in dealing with the Communists in the Trade Unions. It is a comparatively simple matter to expel a handful of Communists from a local Labour Party or even to expel one or more of such bodies which have renounced the Party principles. But a Trade Union cannot be called upon—such is the constitution of the Labour Party—to expel its Communist members. It can only be instructed in the inconsistency of belonging to the Labour Party and sending Communists to represent it in the Party meetings . . . Some of the Trade Unions will be placed in a dilemma.

The Liverpool Conference has enunciated a principle. So far so good. A policy must follow. Communism must not only be condemned ; it must be cast out.—*The Times*, October 1, 1925.

Here is set out an open bourgeois lead to the Right Wing in the Labour movement, setting out in detail every stage of tactics

to be followed in order to split the movement. The language of MacDonald in his "Clear Out" article completely coincides with the provocative language of the *The Times*. He says :—

This will require firm handling, and the National Executive, after the Liverpool decisions, will no doubt put its foot down heavily upon offending parties.

It should be understood that this is not a question simply of Communism and Communists, but of the bourgeoisie and the working-class movement. Everyone knows that the campaign of the bourgeoisie against the working-class movement for a policy of persecution and suppression always begins with the "extremists," and that for the purpose of that suppression the first step is to win the collaboration of the Right Wing leaders in dealing with the "extremists." This has been the experience in country after country. Once the working-class front has been broken, the persecution extends to a wider and wider field, and eventually also to the "moderate" Labour elements. The united front of the working class, of which Mr. MacDonald is so contemptuous ("Superficially the United Front seems desirable. In reality it is a disorganisation of our forces."—*Forward*, September 26, 1925), is a bitter need of the working class in the present period of struggle. Those Left Wing leaders who let themselves be carried along the easy stream of the bourgeois campaign against Communism acted very foolishly and with a complete short-sightedness as to the future issues which they will presently have to face. The delegates of the Conference may for the moment enjoy the applause of the capitalist Press, but they will learn that that applause always costs a very heavy price to the working class. The decisions of the Liverpool Conference constitute a direct invitation to the bourgeoisie to begin the attack.¹ This invitation will be made use of to the full and to an extent that is not yet guessed. The policy of Liverpool is a policy of suicide.

BUT the campaign of the bourgeoisie goes very much further than a campaign of enlarging expulsions. The aim of the bourgeoisie is completely to split the working-class forces, here as in Germany, by directly associating the "moderate"

¹ Since this was written, has taken place the Government's arrest of the Communist leaders—within a fortnight of Liverpool.

Labour elements in the task of suppressing the revolutionary elements. The aim is to involve Right Wing Labour in some form of bourgeois coalition which shall directly throw upon it the responsibilities of administration, of the maintenance of bourgeois law and order, and of the maintenance of supplies in the coming period of struggle. This objective is set out with absolute clearness in such a typical organ of the progressive bourgeoisie as the *Observer* (where the propaganda is directly linked with the propaganda of the O.M.S.) :—

We do not believe that national safety, confidence and progress will ever be sufficiently restored until Liberalism at least, and moderate Labour if possible, combine with progressive Unionism to restore majority rule, the full strength of Parliamentary supremacy and its vital expression—the maintenance at all costs of public transport and supply.—*Observer*, September 27, 1925.

No less clear is the language of *The Times* :—

By disowning and denouncing violent measures the Labour Party leaves possible the co-operation of all men who are bound together by a common citizenship for the promotion of the national prosperity. Men and parties may differ fundamentally as to the desirability of a society founded on social or on private enterprise. No sane man will question the necessity, while that issue is remitted to the arbitrament of reason and public discussion, of using the means now at command for maintaining the supply of all those things which contribute to the common good.—*The Times*, October 3, 1925.

In this sentence, incidentally, which really deserves word-by-word study, is expressed the whole philosophy of the Second International. Remit the issue of Socialism to “the arbitrament of reason and public discussion,” and *in the meantime*, i.e., in the actual class struggle, co-operate with the bourgeoisie (“all men who are bound together in a common citizenship for the promotion of the national prosperity”) for the protection and maintenance of the existing profit-making system (“using the means now at command for maintaining the supply of all those things which contribute to the common good”). Nowhere has been set out more clearly the rôle and destiny of our future Eberts and Scheidemanns.

AND now let us compare with these statements, which express with exact precision the aims of the bourgeoisie, the very significant language of the Labour Party Executive leaders on the question of a Minority Labour Government. The

Labour Party Executive favours the formation of a second Minority Labour Government. But what is a Minority Labour Government, as they understand it? It is in fact a coalition with the bourgeoisie. It is again the taking of office under the control of a bourgeois majority, responsible to and removable by the bourgeoisie, administering the Government State machine under the criticism and supervision of the bourgeois controllers, acting, that is to say, purely and simply as caretakers for the bourgeoisie. What is the difference between this and open Coalition Government? By comparison, in an open coalition the Labour elements might at least make some little bargain as the price of their betrayal of the working class. Here they act simply as agents, performing the dirty work of the bourgeoisie. A foretaste of this, but only a foretaste, has been experienced last year. But in the future period, because the future period is going to be a period of large-scale class struggle, the meaning of the future Labour Government which is being worked for ("We have had a Labour Government. It is possible—and not too remotely possible—that we may have another and a better one."—*Star*, September 30, 1925) will be realised on the backs of the working class.

THE Labour Party Executive leaders are perfectly conscious of their future rôle. Mr. Thomas, in the course of the debate on a Minority Labour Government, openly said that he expected the next Labour Government to arise directly out of the intensification of the industrial situation :—

The Miners were in an industrial dispute. He was convinced that the present Government would fall on its industrial policy. Visualise the situation that would then arise. The Government, having fallen on its industrial policy, would go to the country. In his judgment the Labour Party would be the largest individual party returned to the House of Commons. Well, the country having justified the Labour Party and declared that it considered that Party's industrial policy the best, what was the Party to do? If the Congress passed that resolution the Labour Party would have to say that the other people must go back to office and continue their mischief. A more ridiculous and absurd situation could not arise.—*Manchester Guardian* report, October 1, 1925.

What does this mean? Mr. Thomas is not a revolutionary. He is not proposing that a Labour Government should enter into

office in the midst of intensified class struggle all over the country in order to lead that class struggle, breaking down all constitutional barriers. But what is the alternative? The alternative means that the Labour Government is entering on office as the protector of capitalist law and order, as the protector and maintainer of capitalist supplies, as the responsible head of the capitalist administrative and coercive machine against the working class in the struggle. This is the objective aim of the next Minority Labour Government.

MR. MACDONALD is even more clear as to the future situation. In the course of the same debate on a Minority Labour Government, Mr. MacDonald made an even more significant declaration. He said :—

Unless I am perfectly certain of a team spirit I am far more afraid to go in with a majority than in a minority, because if everyone in the team with a majority is going to develop conscientious scruples and say : “ I am a better class representative than the hundred or two who remain behind the Government,” then that majority is weaker as a Parliamentary weapon than a confessed honest and loyal minority.—
Daily Telegraph, October 1, 1925.

“ I am far more afraid to go in with a majority than in a minority.” In that sentence is expressed the very root of the situation. For, in fact, the bourgeois majority which controlled the last as it will control the next MacDonald Labour Government is not the shackle upon his eager feet that stays his advance—as his apologetic supporters would like to suggest. It is, on the contrary, his safeguard and his protection—against the working class. He could know no greater fear than the possibility of a working-class majority whose existence would remove the last shred of cover from the realities of his policy and whose demands would bring him face to face with his betrayal of the working class. In the unconscious heat of debate he has given expression to the innermost essence of his position. He would rather be in a minority than in a majority. Such a statement may seem strange in the leader of a working-class party aspiring to power. But it is not at all strange if it is understood that a Minority Government means in fact a coalition with the bourgeoisie and that the policy of MacDonald is and can only be a coalition with the bourgeoisie.

THE new programme adopted at Liverpool is only the expression of this policy. It admittedly does not bear the character of a thought-out, serious or fundamental programme. It is simply a safeguarding of the interests of the next Labour Government—a formal renunciation of the otherwise embarrassing claims of even the limited degree of Socialist aims expressed in the old 1918 programme of “Labour and the New Social Order.” It is in fact a retreat, corresponding to the intensification of the class struggle and the increasingly reactionary rôle which Right Wing Labour has to play. The contents are a mixture of small Liberal reforms and Chamberlainite social imperialism. The criticisms of the *New Leader*, reflecting the dismay of old-fashioned Liberal socialism, are fully justified. But the programme is only the expression of a policy, and in the realities of this policy the details of the programme occupy only a secondary position. The essential fact of the position is that the coming period is a period of intensified class struggle. The Labour Party Executive is preparing for the fact that in the crisis of the struggle it will have to come down on the side of bourgeois law and order. The programme is a suitable programme for the coming Law and Order Government or Minority Government.

TO fight this programme and to fight this policy it is necessary to take a wide view of the whole issues of the coming struggle, and not to get lost in details. It is useless for the Left forces to make some small advance or some small contest in this or that particular aspect of the field, on this or that particular detail, and to leave the fundamental strategy and leadership to the Right Wing. An openly reactionary and capitalist-serving leadership on the one hand, and confused and unorganised protests on the other, are a pitiful condition for a great movement to enter into a great struggle. The Left Wing bloc that shall challenge the whole policy of the existing Right Wing leadership, that shall put an alternative policy before the working class and fight for it through thick and thin, and so build up out of the demands of the struggle a new leadership for the working class, is needed now more than ever. What happened at Liverpool happened, not by reason of any weakening of the determination

and the readiness of the masses to face the coming fight (the tremendous response to Trade Union Unity has shown the readiness of the workers to respond to a Left lead), but solely owing to the weakness of those whose duty it was to lead. But the very fact of the tremendous response to Trade Union Unity, the Workers' Alliance and every similar sign of Left leadership, shows the tremendous field that there is and the tremendous response that awaits a real Left leadership which has the courage to stand out on political issues. The necessity of a united Left Wing on the big central issues facing the working class in the coming struggle is the immediate lesson of the Liverpool Conference.

WHAT Liverpool showed is that the new revolutionary situation which confronts the British workers is still only slightly understood. The elements of mass awakening are present, as was shown by the Trade Union Unity campaign and Red Friday. But the awakening forces need a courageous leadership to voice their demands. Revolutionary political understanding is still lacking. In consequence the reins of leadership remain in the hands of the old and experienced reformist leaders who are following a conscious counter-revolutionary policy. The new forces have so far only expressed themselves in limited and traditional forms of Trade Union organisation and the like, and have not yet raised the conscious challenge of new leadership. The working-class awakening which has begun in response to the new situation has so far only superficially affected the upper elements of the movement : and a considerable section of these upper strata are endeavouring to consolidate their position in union with the bourgeoisie against the new forces of working-class revolt. This creates a dangerous situation for the working class and makes more necessary than ever the United Front of all working-class forces. The two immediate dangers after Liverpool, against which the whole movement must be on guard, are the dangers of splits and of bourgeois persecution. Preparation for the coming struggle must occupy first place. The need of the working class is to build up a leadership of struggle in place of the existing leadership, and this necessitates the unification of the Left Wing. The consolidation of the Left Wing is a political necessity of the present stage. On the

other hand the experience of Liverpool has shown that the Left Wing can only attain strength and success in so far as it has political clearness and firmness. Here we come to the cardinal issue which Liverpool most strongly teaches. It is necessary to strengthen and deepen our agitation, to raise, and concentrate on, fundamental political issues, to break down old habits of outlook and organisation, to force to the front the revolutionary realities of the existing situation in Britain and the coming struggles, and to carry all this to the masses of the workers in the Trade Unions and in the factories. Only by so doing will it be possible to build up, against the shackles of the old machine that is paralysing the growth of the working class, a living and militant working-class movement which will be prepared to face the heavy trials of the new period. The task in front is not only one of preparing for an immediate struggle, but of driving home a revolutionary understanding of the issues ahead. This revolutionary understanding alone can give the new leadership.

R. P. D.

Our Pamphlets

We remind our readers of the pamphlets that we issue from time to time as reprints from our pages. These include "The Diplomacy of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald," by U.D.C. (Threepence), "Problems of the Labour Movement," by P. BRAUN (Twopence), "The Burning Question of International Unity," by A. A. PURCELL (One Penny), and "Face-Pidgin: the Chinese Struggle," by TIEN SEN SHIAO (Twopence.)

TOWARDS SOCIALISM OR TOWARDS CAPITALISM ?

The Language of Figures

By L. TROTSKY

I.

THE State Planning Commission (Gosplan) has published a comprehensive table of "control" figures of the national economy of the U.S.S.R. for 1925-26. All this sounds very dry, and, so to speak, bureaucratic. But in these dry, statistical columns, and in the almost equally dry explanations, there can be heard the fine musical notes of the harmonious growth of socialism. It is no longer here a question of guesses, of suppositions, of hopes or of theoretical deductions. On the contrary, we have here the weighty language of figures, convincing enough for even the New York Money Exchange. We wish to dwell for a short time on the most fundamental of these figures. They are well worth it.

In the first place, the very fact of the publication of these comprehensive tables represents for us a veritable economic triumph. The day of their publication (August 20) is a noteworthy day in the Soviet calendar. Agriculture and industry, the goods turnover, both internal and foreign, the circulation of money, the price of goods, credit operations, and the State Budget, are all reflected in these tables, both as regards their development and their mutual relations. We have here a clear, simple and convenient comparison of all the fundamental facts for 1913, for 1924-25, and of the estimated figures for 1925-26. In the explanatory text statistical data for other years of Soviet national economy are given wherever necessary. Thanks to this, we have a general picture of the development of our social structure and of the prospects for the following economic year. The very possibility of constructing such tables may well be considered a victory of the first order.

Socialism is a keeping of accounts. Under the conditions of the New Economic Policy only the forms of our account keeping are different from those which we endeavoured to employ during the period of Military Communism, and which will receive their final form with the development of socialism. But socialism is account keeping, and at present, in the new stage of the new economic policy, it is possibly of even greater importance than when socialism has been finally established. For then account keeping will be purely of an economic character, whereas now it is bound up with complex political problems. And so, in these comprehensive tables and estimates, we see for the first time the Socialist State taking into account all branches of economy, their relations to one another and to their development. This is undoubtedly a great victory. The very possibility of doing this is an undoubted testimony both to our material economic achievements, as also to our success in taking into account every detail, in generalisation, and in directing economic thought. These tables may indeed be looked upon as a kind of matriculation certificate. Only we must remember that a matriculation certificate is only granted to people, not when they conclude their education, but when, having finished their secondary education, they are ready to start on a higher educational course. It is precisely problems of a higher order which these comprehensive tables of the Gosplan place before us. We desire to subject them to an analysis.

The first question which arises when glancing at the tables is, how far are they exact? Here there is wide scope for reservation and even for scepticism. Everyone knows that our statistics and our methods of account keeping are often faulty. Not because they are any worse than other branches of our economic and cultural activities, but only because they reflect all, or, at any rate, many sides of our general backwardness. But this by no means justifies any wholesale distrust. At the present time the figures of the Gosplan are the nearest approximation to the actual facts. Why? For three reasons. In the first place, because they are based on the fullest possible material, which material, moreover, is worked up from day to day by the various sections of the Gosplan. Secondly, because this material has been worked up by the most competent and skilled economists, statisticians and technical experts. Thirdly,

because this work has been carried out by institutions entirely free from departmental interests, and always able to confront the departments directly.¹ It should also be added that there are no commercial or economic secrets for the Gosplan. It can verify (either itself or through the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection) any industrial process or any commercial calculation. All balance sheets are open to it, as also all departmental estimates, and that, not only in their final form, but also in the original drafts. Of course, there will still be disputes regarding separate figures. Certain facts are disputed from this or that point of view by the departments. The corrections of given departments, whether accepted or not, may exercise a considerable influence on certain practical enterprises, on the export and import estimates, on the assignments made in the Budget for certain purposes, and so on. But these corrections can have no influence on fundamental facts. There cannot be at the present time better thought-out and more thoroughly verified figures than those published in the Gosplan tables. And in any case even inexact figures, providing they are based on previous experience, are far preferable to working in the dark. In the first place, we introduce corrections based on our experience, and we learn therefrom, whereas in the second case we simply exist on chance.

The tables are brought up to October 1, 1926. This means that in about twenty months' time, when we shall have at our disposal the reports from our economic departments for 1925-26, we shall be in a position to compare the facts of to-morrow with our suppositions of to-day as expressed in figures. Whatever discrepancy we may find, the very possibility of making such a comparison will in itself be a valuable economic lesson.

In discussing the exactitude of our forecast, it is necessary before all to understand what manner of forecast we have in mind in the given case. When, for instance, the Howard Institute in America endeavours by means of statistics to determine the direction or rate of development of various branches of American national economy, they work to a certain extent in the same way as

¹ "The figures given by operative economic departments are more than incomplete, they are even weighted in a given direction." This is an explanatory note by the Gosplan. We must carefully bear in mind this severe stricture. With the participation of the Gosplan and the press, our operative economic departments must be taught to give objective, that is, correct accounts.

astronomers. That is to say, they endeavour to determine the dynamics of processes entirely independent of their will, with only this difference, that one cannot apply methods anywhere near so exact to statistics as to astronomy. Our statistics stand in a fundamentally different position. They exercise decisive influence in the institutions which direct our national economy. Estimates are here not merely the product of passive forecast, but they are the pivot of active economic observation. Every figure is not a mere photograph, it is a signpost. The table of estimates has been worked out by a State Department in which the very highest directing staff of our national economy participates. When the table says that our exports should rise from 462,000,000 roubles in the current year to 1,200,000,000 roubles in 1925-26, that is by 160 per cent., this is not merely a forecast, it is an instruction. On the basis of what we have already achieved, we are shown here what more we must do. When the table says that the capital investments in our industries—that is to say, expenditure on the renewal and extension of our basic capital—should amount to 900,000,000 roubles, this again is not merely a passive calculation, but a statistical well-founded practical task of the first importance, and this is precisely the character of the table from beginning to end. It is a dialectical combination of a theoretical forecast with practical observation, *i.e.*, the combining in calculation of objective conditions and tendencies with the subjective formulation of the economic tasks confronting the workers' and peasants' State. Herein lies the fundamental distinction between the Gosplan tables and all possible statistical data, accounts and forecasts of any capitalist State. Herein also, as we shall see below, lies the gigantic superiority of our—that is, of socialist—methods over capitalist methods.

The tables of estimates of the Gosplan give, however, a valuation in figures of socialist economic methods, not in general, but in their application under given conditions, that is to say, at a definite stage of the so-called new economic policy. Spontaneous economic processes can be dealt with in the main by the objective statistical method. In their turn, the economic processes directed by the State at one stage or another make themselves evident in the market, and thereby are linked up with the spontaneous, so to speak, uncontrolled, economic processes, which owe their origin principally

to the irregular phenomena of peasant economy. To a very large extent planning at the present time consists precisely in the conjunction of the controlled and directed economic processes with the spontaneous processes of the market. In other words, in our national economy, socialist tendencies at various stages of development are combined with and interlocked with capitalist tendencies, again at different stages of maturity and immaturity. Our estimate figures give the connection between the one set of processes and the other, and thereby reveal the equilibrium of development. Therein lies the fundamental socialist importance of our draft plan.

That the economic processes developing in our country are fundamentally antagonistic, presenting a struggle of two systems which mutually exclude one another, this we have always known and never concealed. On the contrary, precisely during the transition to the new economic policy, the historical question was formulated by Lenin in two pronouns—"who whom?" The Menshevik theoreticians, and particularly Otto Bauer, condescendingly welcomed the new economic policy as a sensible capitulation of the premature violent Bolshevik methods of socialist economy to well-tried and reliable capitalism. The misgivings of some, and the hopes of others, have now received a very thorough verification, and its results are expressed in the estimate figures of our social-economic draft plans. Its significance lies also in this, that it is now impossible any longer to talk in a general way of the socialist and capitalist elements of our national economy, of plans *in general*, and of spontaneity *in general*. Even though it may be only roughly, and in a preliminary way, we have now made our calculations ; we have now defined quantitatively the relation between socialism and capitalism in our national economy, both for to-day and for to-morrow. We have thereby obtained valuable practical material for a reply to the historic question—"Who Whom?"

II.

In all that has been said above, only the theoretical significance of the Gosplan tables has been dwelt upon. We have shown the enormous importance for us of the fact that we have at last been enabled to estimate all the fundamental processes of our national economy, their connections and developments, and thereby obtain

a basis for a far more conscious and considered policy, and that not in the sphere of national economy alone. But of far more importance to us is, of course, the actual content of the Gosplan comprehensive tables, that is to say, the actual statistical data which express our social development.

In order to receive a correct reply to the question—towards socialism or towards capitalism?—we must first of all formulate correctly the question itself. This question naturally divides itself into three sub-questions : (a) Are our productive forces developing? (b) What are the social forms of this development? (c) What is the rate of the development?

The first question is the simplest and the most fundamental. Without the development of the productive forces, neither capitalism nor socialism is conceivable. Military communism, which had its birth in stern historical necessity, spent itself quickly and impeded the further development of the productive forces. The most elementary, and at the same time the most compelling, significance of the new economic policy, consisted in the development of the productive forces as the basis for any social movement whatever. The new economic policy was welcomed by the bourgeoisie and the Menshevists as a necessary (but, of course, “insufficient”) step on the road towards the liberation of the productive forces. Menshevik theoreticians, both of the Kautsky and of the Otto Bauer persuasion, approved of the new economic policy precisely as the dawn of capitalist restoration in Russia. They added: either the new economic policy will destroy the Bolshevik dictatorship (a happy consummation) or the Bolshevik dictatorship will destroy the new economic policy (a very sad outcome). *Smenavekhovism*² in its first form rose from the belief that the new economic policy would ensure the development of the productive forces in a capitalist form. And now, the comprehensive tables of the Gosplan give us the basic elements for a reply, not only to the question regarding the general development of the productive forces, but also to the question as to what social forms this development is assuming.

We know very well, of course, that the social forms of our economic development are of dual character, since they are based

² *Smiena Viekh* (‘The Change’ of Landmarks) was the slogan of a movement among Russian bourgeois and intellectual *émigrés* in support of the Soviet Government.

on both co-operation and antagonism of the capitalist and socialist methods and aims. The new economic policy has to work under these conditions of our development; therein lies its fundamental content. But such a general idea of the antagonism within our development is no longer sufficient for us. We seek and demand a measurement as accurate as possible of these economic antagonisms, that is to say, we demand not only the dynamic co-efficients of the general development, but comparative co-efficients of the specific gravity of this or that tendency. On the reply to this question depends much; more correctly speaking, everything in our internal and our external policy.

Let us consider the question from its most acute angle. We may say that, without a reply to the question regarding the relative force of the capitalist and socialist tendencies, and of the direction in which the relation between their specific gravities is changing as the productive forces grow, it is impossible to form a clear and reliable idea of the prospects and possible dangers of our peasant policy. In reality, if it turned out that, as the productive forces developed, the capitalist tendencies grow at the expense of the socialist tendencies, then the final extension of the framework of commodity-capitalist relations in the villages might have a fatal influence, directing all further development on the road towards capitalism. On the other hand, if the specific gravity of the State, *i.e.*, of socialist economy, increases in the general national economy of the country, then the greater or less "liberation" of the commodity-capitalist process in the villages becomes only a question of the relative equilibrium of forces, and may be solved from merely a business point of view. How? When? To what limits? In other words, if the productive forces in the hands of the socialist State, and which has in its hands all the commanding positions, not only grow rapidly, but grow more rapidly than the private capitalist productive forces of the towns and villages; if this has been confirmed by the experience of the most difficult period of restoration, then it is clear that a certain development of the commodity-capitalist tendencies, springing from within peasant economy, in no way threatens to take us unawares, or to overcome us by the transformation of quantity into quality; that is, by a sudden turn towards capitalism.

Finally, the third question before us is the rate of our development from the point of view of world economy. At a first glance it might appear that this question, although important, is nevertheless of entirely subordinate significance. Of course, it is desirable to reach socialism "as soon as possible," but once the socialist tendencies are assured of victory under our new economic policy conditions, then the question of the rate of this movement would seem to be only of minor importance. This, however, is not so. Such a conclusion might have been correct (but not wholly so) if we had a closely-knit self-sufficing economy. But this is not the case. Precisely owing to our successes, we have entered the world market. That is to say, we have entered into the system of the world division of labour, and, moreover, we remain surrounded by capitalism. Under these conditions, the rate of our economic development defines the force of our resistance to the economic pressure of world capital, and to the military-political pressure of world imperialism. And, at present, these factors cannot be left out of account.

If we now apply our three leading questions to the comprehensive tables and explanatory notes of the Gosplan, then we shall see that the reply of the tables to the first two questions regarding the development of the productive forces and of the social forms of this development, is not only both clear and concise, but most favourable. As for the third question regarding the rate of development, our economic development so far has only reached the stage of considering this question in its international aspect. But here too, as we shall see, the favourable reply to the first two questions prepares the grounds for the solution of the third question. The latter will form the highest criterion for our economic development in the near future.

(To be continued)

SCARBOROUGH AND LIVERPOOL

By P. BRAUN

AFTER the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party Conference the question naturally arises as to how it could happen that the same British Trade Unions could adopt the path of the class struggle against Capitalism and Imperialism through one set of representatives at Scarborough, while at Liverpool, through other representatives they came out in defence of class collaboration under the banner of social-imperialism.

If we forget for one moment the resolutions passed at Liverpool and Scarborough and simply deal with the structure of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress, we at first receive an impression of idyllic harmony and personal accord between these two organisations that the British working class has created. The executives of both organisations hold joint meetings, at which general questions concerning the entire British movement are discussed and decided upon. Both the Labour Party Executive and the General Council have their offices in the same buildings, have common departments conducting press, information and research work, international questions, &c. The biggest campaigns, as a general rule, are conducted jointly by both organisations. For this reason it is certainly so much the more astonishing that there was so acute a parting of the ways between Liverpool and Scarborough. In order to discover the reasons for this sharp distinction between Liverpool and Scarborough, we must first of all attempt to unravel the real physiognomy of these two Congresses.

Let us take Scarborough first. The Trades Union Congress at Scarborough started its work after the Trade Unions had succeeded in resisting the attack on the miners' wages without any assistance on the part of the Labour Party. The trade unionists proudly called July 31—the day when the mining magnates called off the lock-out—"Red Friday." This Red Friday was naturally popular with the workers, because, ever since Black Friday four years ago

they had not really gained one serious victory in the struggle against the capitalist attack on wages. The Trade Unions were indeed proud of this accomplishment, commemorating the fact that they had succeeded in warding off the powerful blow of capital by means of their own Trade Union resources.

The speech of A. B. Swales, the President of the Trades Union Congress, reflected this proud and fighting mood. The special correspondent of the *Daily Herald* remarked in his report on the opening of the Congress, that never had the speech of a leader produced such emotion as was caused by Swales' speech at Scarborough. Harry Pollitt¹ asserts that two of the statements in Swales' speech met with exceptional sympathy. These concerned the necessity for a consistent fighting policy, and secondly concerning those "good comrades" who in bygone days preached the gospel of destroying capitalism and who now attempt to save this bankrupt system with the aid of the ruling classes. Thus Swales repaid his colleague Cramp in advance, and with interest, for the speech he was to pronounce at Liverpool.

However, despite Swales' fighting speech, the *Manchester Guardian* the next day was able to write that the influence of Moscow (*i.e.*, the idea of the revolutionary class struggle) was only seen in the sphere of phraseology and not in the sphere of activity. What was the reason for this wise liberal newspaper coming to a conclusion so consoling for the ruling classes? An attentive study of the first day of the Scarborough Congress shows that the conclusion arrived at by this thoughtful journal has a very serious basis.

The General Council, in its Report presented to Congress, made a timid attempt to distinguish itself somewhat from the Labour Party. It modestly spoke of the necessity for separate premises, and declared that the joint departments controlled by the Labour Party Executive and by the General Council cannot cope sufficiently with the work of the T.U.C. Everyone understood that the Trades Union Congress was attempting to emerge from its position of *subjection*. But the General Council did not have the courage to look the problem in the face and tell the truth as to the mutual relations existing between the two centres of the Labour

¹THE LABOUR MONTHLY, October, 1925, Vol. VII, No. 10, p. 605.

movement. The right wing were on the look-out. They talked demagogically about unity, hiding from the Congress the fact that the group which controls the Labour Party subserves the interests of the ruling class.

The memory of the events which preceded July 31 was still keenly impressed on the minds of those who took part in the Scarborough Congress. Everyone knew that MacDonald had made heroic attempts to intervene in the crisis that had broken out in the mining industry, and that Swales, Hicks, Smith and Cook held aloof from the "politicians." Then why was Swales so afraid of MacDonald's intervention? The leaders of the Miners' Federation and of the Trades Union Congress knew quite well that the intervention of MacDonald would have led to the whole question being handed over for solution to the National Joint Council, in which MacDonald had an assured majority. On the basis of this experience the General Council could have openly opposed this constitutional arrangement which hands over the leadership of the entire Labour movement to the Labour Party. But the General Council was timid. As a result of this it was really Thomas and Clynes who were victorious.

The next question which faced Congress was that of the General Council's powers. The Labour Party is an absolutely centralised organisation. From time to time conflicts occur between the Labour Party Executive and the Parliamentary Party. But as a general rule it is the leader of the Party who has the decisive vote, who acts on his own responsibility, and who comes down heavily upon any organisation which dares to "poke its nose into other people's business." The General Council, however, is an organ without power. The chairman of the General Council is in no way whatever a leader. He is a Caliph for an hour. Last year Swales was president. This year the president's chair is occupied by the consistent conservative Pugh. The election of president is not determined by the views of the candidate, but by some kind of very complicated "turn" commencing from the year 1868. Even without taking into consideration the National Joint Council mentioned above, advantage is on the side of the Labour Party in all the joint departments as well as in the Labour movement as a whole.

The question of the General Council's powers was important

and momentous not only from the point of view of mutual relations with the Labour Party, but also from the view-point of the vital interests of the Labour movement. The right wing realised at Scarborough how serious the position was and rushed headlong into the struggle. The left wing took up the defence of the General Council. But the General Council itself remained silent, as if overwhelmed. And it was of course difficult to obtain an increase of power for an organisation which itself remained silent on this subject. After this the ruling classes naturally had a right to say : things are not so bad as they looked.

It is true, the subsequent work of Congress noticeably changed the generous mood of the entire Press, including even the *Manchester Guardian*. Day by day the swing towards the Left became clearer and clearer and the ruling classes began to sound the alarm, the leaders of the Labour Party soon following in their footsteps. There is no doubt, however, that a few days after Congress terminated its labours, the leaders of the Labour Party, and with them the leaders of the bourgeois parties, in summing up everything that had taken place at Scarborough, were able to arrive at the calm conclusion that the left wing mood of Congress was not so very dangerous as it seemed during the days when it had made its appearance in a number of decidedly revolutionary resolutions.

It was clear from the discussions that the overwhelming majority of delegates were thirsting for a sharp change in the policy of the Trade Unions. The right wing quickly sensed the situation created. They understood that they only had to come out with their full programme and they could be smashed, so they preferred a tactic of flank attacks, and only endeavoured to prevent the left-wing mood of the Congress majority acquiring definite forms. The centrists and left wingers, including the group of Swales and Purcell, were rather passive. The real leadership passed into the hands of the Minority Movement delegates, for whom a very large number of delegates began to display all the more sympathy. The Minority Movement was sufficiently strong to carry a number of important resolutions with the help of the left wing, but it was still too weak to effect the reorganisation of the apparatus of the British Trade Union movement.

The decisive fight arose in connection with the resolution of the Tailors and Garment Workers' Union, which reads :—

This Congress declares that the Trade Union movement must organise to prepare the Trade Unions in conjunction with the party of the workers to struggle for the overthrow of capitalism.

At the same time Congress warns the workers against all attempts to introduce capitalist schemes of co-partnership, which in the past have failed to give the workers any positive rights, but instead have usually served as fetters retarding the forward movements.

Congress further considers that strong, well-organised shop committees are indispensable weapons in the struggle to force the capitalists to relinquish their grip on industry, and, therefore, pledges itself to do all in its power to develop and strengthen workshop organisation.

This resolution, in spite of certain points that are not quite clear, embodies not only a new programme, but also a new form of organisation. On the very eve of Congress arch-left "Plebs" criticised the points on factory and workshop committees put forward in my pamphlet, *Problems of the Labour Movement*. But at Congress itself even certain right wing leaders had not the courage to speak against the Garment Workers' resolution, as their delegations had decided to vote for the resolution. And this resolution received 2,138,000 votes against 1,787,000. This was a majority to be reckoned with. What is most characteristic of all is that Communists of the Minority Movement well-known to Congress supported this resolution.

The fate of the resolution on Trade Union unity was also very instructive. Here the Minority were able to secure the deletion of the clause limiting international unity within the bounds of Amsterdam, and instead gained the substitution of the clause instructing the General Council to work for an "all-inclusive International."

The resolutions on the Dawes plan and on imperialism speak for themselves. The bourgeois Press teased MacDonald that every one of these resolutions was a resounding slap in the face for him. This same Press remarked that Pollitt's speeches on these two questions were listened to with the most profound attention. After all, it would hardly be possible that anyone or anything would erase from the history of the British Labour movement the fact that 3,032,000 votes were given for a clearly-worded resolution against

imperialism, while only 79,000 voted against. The press paid an enormous amount of attention to the speeches of Purcell, Pollitt, Cook, Elsbury. However, one could hardly explain the colossal change in the mood of the Congress by the eloquence of the Minority and Left Wing leaders. The reasons evidently lie deeper.

For a considerable number of years two groups of Trade Union officials have played a decisive rôle. The first and most numerous group was composed of those officials whose societies were in effect simply benefit clubs. This group naturally adopted a hostile attitude towards strikes and towards any development of the class struggle affecting the state of the cash-box. As guardians of the fire-proof safes, they were the apostles of moderation and conservatism. The second group was recruited from among members of all kinds of arbitration and conciliation boards—the so-called industrial diplomats. These two groups pushed into the background those Trade Union officials who adopted the standpoint of the class struggle. To use the terminology of Webb, the business-like officials vanquished the demagogues.

But Webb finished his *History of Trade Unionism*, which is an ode to a moderate man, in 1920. Since then things have radically changed. The safes of the largest Trade Unions have become empty and the guardians have consequently climbed down from their towers. The diplomats have also been rather luckless. Respect for them naturally waned. And both groups together were compelled to recede into the background under the pressure of mass working-class discontent, increasing under the influence of a successful capitalist offensive. The masses were seeking for new slogans and new ideas. They eagerly grasped all proposals in which they saw indications of new paths and new possibilities. Therein lies the secret of the growth of the Minority Movement. But they were not yet sufficiently organised to smash the machine constructed by the old trade union bureaucracy.

Swales made an honest appeal for shaking off the shackles of capitalism, but the General Council he leads dared not lay hands on its own rusty fetters, the fetters of a Congress constitution which dates from 1894, and which was largely inspired, according to the authoritative statement of Webb, by James Mawdsley, a reactionary leader of the cotton trades who was a Conservative

parliamentary candidate in 1906. As a result of this peculiar situation, the Fifty-Seventh Trades Union Congress, after adopting a number of revolutionary resolutions moved by the Minority Movement, and supported by the left wing, elected a General Council more than half of whose members could hardly be expected to execute wholeheartedly the mandate given to the General Council.

Now let us turn to Liverpool.

The Liverpool Conference was very thoroughly prepared. The leaders of the Labour Party, to all appearances, did not have sufficient faith in Trade Union democracy to rely on its creative ability. They preferred to prepare a complete set of resolutions on all questions under the general heading "A Co-ordinated Policy of National Reconstruction and Reform." The "co-ordinated policy" contains answers to all problems of internal and external policy. Every separate section of the resolutions commences with praise for the leaders of the Labour Party, and the "heroes" of the Labour Government. The first resolution remarks without any ambiguity that the Labour Party has already "justified the hopes and ideals of its founders." Proudly put, *n'est-ce-pas?* But it is not so much the tone as the contents of this resolution that takes the palm.

It is sufficient to glance hurriedly through these resolutions to become absolutely convinced that Liberalism in England is not so dead as it is supposed to be. It has merely been reincarnated. The difference between the declamations in the Labour Party resolutions and the old manifestoes of the Liberal Party is simply that MacDonald and his friends have replaced the usual phrases about justice and humanity by diffuse words on Socialism and public ownership.

It is said that Sidney Webb put a great deal of work into these resolutions. If that is so, the Conference did well in taking revenge for this Liberal programme by causing him to be defeated in the elections to the Executive Committee. The traces of "Sidney Webbicalism" are clearly perceptible in the entire programme of "reconstruction." But the influence of Liberalism is felt still more. Webb and his friends tried to persuade the workers that their main task in life was to permeate the ruling class with the spirit of Socialism. It could hardly be said that they have succeeded. On the other hand, they *have* succeeded in permeating a considerable section of the

leadership of the British working class with the spirit of Liberalism. And the Fabians were not alone in this work. There are many capable pupils of Liberalism among the leaders of the Labour Party, pupils who, in the authoritative words of the late Keir Hardie, had been able to deceive the masses for years. (See Keir Hardie's open letter to Lloyd George in 1903.)

Having prepared this Liberal programme, the leaders of the Labour Party calmly and assuredly awaited its approval by the Liverpool Conference. At Labour Party conferences a tradition has already been established whereby resolutions are moved from the platform, and the delegates vote for these humbly and obediently, from time to time interrupting the speakers either with applause or with polite critical observations.

During the Scarborough Congress the Liberal leaders of the Labour Party became rather discouraged. An energetic mobilisation of the "true friends" commenced. Ramsay MacDonald himself assumed the leadership of this campaign, assuring his friends that the prophets of evil would be severely punished at Liverpool and that the virtuous people would leave that Conference cheerfully celebrating victory. By making the fullest use of the Labour Party machine it proved easier than had been expected for MacDonald to justify the hopes of reaction, which so persistently goaded him on to avenge himself for Scarborough.

MacDonald's first task was to deal a knock-out blow to the Communist Party. The first discussions already revealed that the weight of the Communist Party at the Labour Party Conference could not be compared with that of the Minority Movement in the Trade Unions. The Minority Movement succeeded in rallying the most active elements of the trade union movement, mobilising and organising those masses who, under the blows of decaying capitalism, are striving to rid themselves of the oppressive heritage of the past. On the political arena, however, the Lefts represented and represent disconnected and scattered groups. On the other hand the Liverpool Conference once more showed the fundamental difference between the General Council and the Labour Party Executive. The latter is a systematically organised political machine which has been nourished on a century's experience of

Liberalism, in the work of splitting up the masses in general, and the proletarian masses in particular.

The voting on the question of excluding the Communists showed only a small minority of about 300,000 votes supporting the Communists. The other Left groups were apparently outvoted at the Caucus meetings of their delegations. Thus MacDonald had a more or less solid majority of 90 per cent. of the Conference. It is obvious that this 90 per cent. is obtained as a result of the vertical division of the Conference which makes new and young groupings merely static and deprives them of the possibility of influencing the fate and decisions of the Conference. It will suffice to say that if in the Miners' Federation 401,000 votes were given for MacDonald, the remaining minority of 399,000 miners could not express their attitude to the question under discussion. It was thanks to such mechanism that the resolution for the exclusion of the Communists, despite resolutions to the contrary effect on the part of scores of Labour organisations, was able to secure 2,870,000 votes as against 321,000.

Two factors in the attack on the Communists deserve attention. The Executive Committee, in moving the resolution, only spoke of individual sections of the local Labour Parties. These sections first saw light as a result of the new constitution accepted by the Labour Party on the advice of Mr. Webb in 1918. It is natural that the Liberal leaders of the Labour Party value these organisations highly. Up to the time of the Liverpool Conference, the hopes that had been placed in them had not been justified. When MacDonald spoke spitefully about manufactured resolutions, he had in view the hundreds of resolutions of local Labour Parties, which occupied a very large part of the agenda of the Liverpool Conference. Each resolution of the Executive Committee was accompanied by an enormous number of precise left wing amendments in which the direct influence of the Communist Party's proposals, or more exactly, of the programme which the Communist Party opposed to the co-ordinated MacDonald-Webb programme, could be seen. The Labour Party, through its Liberal leaders, wanted to get rid of this proletarian influence on the individual sections at any price. And by a cruel irony of fate it was with the aid of Trade Union

votes that MacDonald carried out his plan (on paper, of course) of liberalising the local Labour Parties.

The subsequent work of the Conference is of no substantial interest. *Nolens volens* one must agree with *The Times* (October 1, 1925) that, practically speaking, MacDonald was able to get all his resolutions put through in one day, and then go home. As a general rule the delegations, or rather their secretaries, monotonously handed in their cards and the Conference tellers registered millions of votes for various sections of the "reconstruction" programme. The further things developed, the more frank and the more cynical became Messrs. Clynes, Thomas, MacDonald and their disciples. MacDonald hurled dirty accusations against the Communists, sneering, *en passant*, against those workers who were clearly expressing their discontent with the Liberal trend of the Labour Party. The *Daily Herald*, for instance, reported the following incident : MacDonald attacked the Communists who are very popular at street corner meetings ; Gallacher interrupted him with the question—"What about the support we are getting ?" And MacDonald with pride and disdain replied, "I don't care two straws what support you are getting." He then endeavoured to persuade his audience that they should highly esteem those Lords and Ladies who enter the Labour Party, as their minds are directed by the will of God.

The overwhelming majority of resolutions tabled by local organisations were either left entirely without discussion, or else fell through. The attempt of Bevin to move a resolution directed against MacDonald, which amounted to nothing more than that the Labour Party should not take power until it has a majority in the House of Commons, was defeated, despite the support it obtained from all the Left groups.

Bevin's vehement criticism of MacDonald, in which he recalled MacDonald's pre-war tactics of collaboration with the Liberals and his frequently hostile attitude to the Trade Union struggle (a reference to MacDonald's notorious preparations to use Lloyd George's Emergency Powers Act to "settle" the London Transport strike when he was Prime Minister) is a significant fact which deserves more notice than it has received. It shows the extent of the divergence between even an extreme right wing Trade Union

leader and the "politicians." Only one resolution, that calling for support for the *Sunday Worker*, rallied practically one-third of the votes of the entire conference, the voting being 1,143,000 for the resolution and 2,036,000 against.

It would be a mistake, however, to exaggerate the significance of the MacDonald victory. At Liverpool the leaders remembered Scarborough. Only one year ago the Labour Party Executive presented the Twenty-Fourth Conference with a proud statement about the carrying out of the Dawes plan, which they eulogised as an instrument of peace. At this year's conference, however, both Cramp and MacDonald made profoundly diplomatic speeches on that topic, apologising rather than boasting. Moreover, the resolutions passed on the question of imperialism tally badly one with the other, and spoil the structure of the socialist-imperialist conceptions of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party.

But of course the substance of the matter does not lie in one or other of the new notes sounded at Liverpool. The political significance of Liverpool is that it was a challenge, under the direct leadership of the ruling classes, to the better elements in the British Labour movement. Despite all the slovenliness of the left wing, it can hardly refrain from acting now. Prior to the Liverpool Conference, the Communists persistently called upon the left wing to rally together, so as to act in a co-ordinated and agreed fashion. These appeals had no practical results. But MacDonald has strengthened these appeals with hammer-blows. And the left wing will be compelled to respond. The stronger the Labour Party gets, the more are the workers interested in seeing that it does not become an instrument of capitalist oppression. After Liverpool, the workers must seriously ponder over the touching contact that has been established between the Labour Party leaders and their worst enemies, and also over the increased enmity between these leaders and the workers' best friends.

MacDonalдите "reconstruction" fits very nicely into an artificially composed resolution. But such a resolution does not deter the process of disintegration of British capitalism. It is true that the Stock Exchange could feel encouraged for a short while, after MacDonald's victory. But profound economic processes will not yield much to the influence of Liberal-Labour resolutions.

Scarborough was powerless to form an apparatus for struggling against the capitalist attack. Liverpool actually participated in this attack, overwhelming the most active wing of the Labour movement. And beneath the blows of this offensive the workers must forge their weapons of defence and attack.

I will endeavour to sum up my conclusions.

At Scarborough there was not a single group that could lead the work of the Congress. The free struggle of various groups within the Congress proved the existence of colossal movements among the masses of the workers. These movements were able to acquire definite organised expression, thanks to the considerable achievement of the Minority Movement. The right wing at the Scarborough Congress preferred, like Brer Fox, to "lay low and say nuffin," rather than to fight for their programme openly. At Liverpool just the opposite was the case. The work was conducted by a well-organised and correctly-adjusted political machine. But at Liverpool the extreme flank of the left wing—the Communist Party, came out into the open.

The Left elements proved to be disconnected and badly organised both at Liverpool and at Scarborough. Both Congresses constitute a call to the awakening workers not to be content with fine words and high-sounding resolutions, but to endeavour to snatch the apparatus they have themselves built up out of the hands of those who hand over the banner of the Labour Movement in order to consecrate its suppression.

GETTING MOSUL INTO PERSPECTIVE

By W. N. EWER

THERE are among us certain superficial Marxists who, having learned that there is oil in Mosul, say contentedly : “ Here is the economic interpretation of the question ” and proceed to murmur the euphonious names of Deterding, Zaharoff and Gulbenkian, for all the world after the manner of Mr. William Bailey talking of the Jews or Mr. Walton Newbold of munition makers.

Now the fact is that, though there is plenty of oil in Mosul politics—perhaps more than in Mosul itself—the roots of the whole business run far deeper and further back. The Mosul question is a part of that “ Eastern question ” which has been for a century the focal point of British foreign policy. And unless we get it into its proper setting and perspective we are likely to make a very bungling job of understanding it.

That Eastern question—made vitally important to British Imperialism by the possession of India and the conspicuous feebleness of Turkey—is the *leitmotif* of nineteenth-century British diplomacy. For, even before the cutting of the Suez Canal, both Downing Street and Calcutta realised instinctively the strategic importance of the Middle East. Already in 1845 it was obvious to Kinglake that “ the Englishman, leaning far over to guard his loved India, will plant his feet firmly in the Valley of the Nile and sit in the seats of the Faithful.” And throughout the century we were ready again and again to go to war rather than allow France or Russia to gain a foothold in Syria or Egypt or the Persian Gulf.

The British Government jealously watched the Levant. The Indian Government edged its way tentatively up the Persian Gulf, where British warships patrolled the waters and British “ politicals ” intrigued with vaguely independent local rulers like the Sheikhs of Koweit and Bahrein and Mohammarah. Southern Persia and Mesopotamia were marked out as Great Britain’s share of the heritage when the sick men of Teheran and Constantinople should finally collapse.

Right back in 1833, Palmerston declared that it was impossible to allow Mehemet Ali, the protégé of the French, to control Syria, for Syria was "the avenue to Mesopotamia;" while half a century later Beaconsfield was anxious, under pretext of supporting Turkey, to send an Indian force to occupy Basra and Bagdad. He failed to persuade his colleagues. The Indians went spectacularly but rather pointlessly to Malta. But out of the turmoil he did snatch Cyprus. It was a significant and not usually understood choice. For Cyprus has no harbour to compare with Suda Bay; nor has it any relevance to the defence of the Canal or the blockade of the Straits. But it lies—and this was undoubtedly in Beaconsfield's mind—athwart the Gulf of Alexandretta and the historic route through Aleppo to the Euphrates valley.

For three-quarters of the nineteenth century, then, Mesopotamia had been marked down as a sometime British possession. The Valley of the Euphrates, like the Valley of the Nile, was both strategically important and economically desirable. England had pegged out her claim before, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the discovery of the South Persian oilfields and the rapidly developing importance of oil came to emphasise its importance. It was in 1901 that Mr. D'Arcy was granted a concession of all South-West Persian oil-rights; in 1909 that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was formed.

Meanwhile, rather overlooked by British diplomacy, which was for the time being intent on other troubles, the German economic penetration of Asia Minor had begun. The Deutsche Bank and its associates had their first railway concession in 1888. By 1896 they had reached Konia. In 1903 the concession was signed which empowered the German company to continue its line through Bagdad to the Gulf.

It was a direct challenge to British domination of the Gulf, to British control of the new Persian oilfield and to the British reversion to Mesopotamia. Imperialism, already bitterly jealous of German expansion, was up in arms. An offer to let British capital participate in the concession was contemptuously rejected. Britain wanted control, not a junior partnership. And the Foreign Office was set the task of blocking at all costs the German scheme.

Ten years of tortuous diplomacy followed. The newly formed

Anglo-French Entente, soon reinforced by Russia, fought the diplomatic battles of France in Morocco and of Russia in the Balkans. On the Persian Gulf, France and Russia repaid Britain for her support by their aid in opposing the completion of the Bagdadbahn. Their chief weapons were two. Great Britain since 1899 claimed to be protector of the Sheikh of Koweit. And Koweit was the destined terminal of the line. More important still, the consent of the powers was necessary for the increase of the customs dues by which Turkey was to provide the money for the kilometric guarantee required by the Deutsche Bank. To this the triple veto of the Entente was opposed.

Germany, baffled, tried to buy off British opposition. A tentative offer was made that the German line should run to Bagdad, and that the sector thence to the Gulf should be British built and British controlled. It was in effect an offer to partition Mesopotamia into a German and a British sphere of influence. A tempting proposition. But Russia had no wish to see such a solution. France feared that it might be the first step to an Anglo-German *rapprochement*. The German Government wanted "compensation" elsewhere. And Sir Edward Grey, under pressure from his allies, refused to deal on these terms. His refusal may have been influenced by the fact that the oil of Mosul had now become a factor in the calculations, and that the partition would have left it in the German zone.

The first survey had been made in 1901 by a German expert who reported that the region was "among the richest in the world." It was an enthusiastic judgment which has yet to be confirmed; for even now this coveted area has not been properly drilled. Oil companies know to their cost how often the hopes of the surveyor and the geologist are disappointed when put to the test. And there are not wanting experts who declare roundly that the fabulous oil-wealth of Mosul is a myth.

The prospects, however, were sufficiently alluring to attract the big and little oil men. Anglo-Persian were showing interest. Germans were following up the original survey. Concession hunting was opening at Constantinople. The Chester group had already secured provisional rights, though on a title which was later to be fiercely debated. Mosul was becoming as desirable as the lower

Euphrates valley and the Gulf ports. The securing of it must lie in the future. For the moment the urgent task was to keep the Germans out.

Suddenly in 1912 the barrier which Sir Edward Grey had laboured to build collapsed. It was largely in deference to Russian opposition that he had refused the tempting offer of 1910. And now Russia let him down. The Potsdam conversations between the Tsar and the Kaiser had alarmed London. (For throughout the pre-war decade any contact between one Entente partner and the Germans was watched with suspicious fear by the other two.) And when it was learnt that the Russians had withdrawn opposition to the customs increase and had reached an agreement with the Germans for the linking of the Anatolian railways, via Mosul and Bagdad, with a North Persian system, the British were terrified and furious. Sir Edward hinted that he might reverse his whole foreign policy. King George expressed his august displeasure. Simla was haunted by visions of Turko-German armies at Herat. All for a while was consternation and confusion.

When it died down, Sir Edward informed Sazonoff that he had no alternative now but to come to the best agreement he could with Turkey and with Germany, since the compact of opposition had been broken, and since it was reported that even without the customs increase funds for the building might be obtained by the Deutsche Bank.

It was indeed imperative to sacrifice something in order to retain the essential grasp upon the Gulf terminal of the railway and in order to obtain some share in the prospective oil supplies of Mosul. Compensation was looked for in Southern Persia. The Anglo-Russian agreement had left this in the "neutral zone." But now operations there began in earnest. The Persian Government was asked for the concession for a railway system running eastward from Mohammarah to Baluchistan. The activities of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company were intensified, and the negotiations opened which were to result in the investment in 1914 of £2,000,000 of British Government money in the Persian oil fields. The policing of Southern Persia began to be a subject of discussion. The military were asked to consider what force must be sent to protect the oil

fields if need be. Sir Percy Cox, the Indian Political Department's "Resident" in the Persian Gulf, became exceedingly active.

Negotiations were opened with Turkey and with Germany. They were, after the Grey habit, kept profoundly secret ; and when rumours gave rise to questions in the House of Commons, they were met by evasive or misleading answers. The bargaining, one gathers, was hard : but the bargain was struck, and on June 29, 1914, Sir Edward, rather casually, and in the middle of a long speech, informed the House that he had reached an agreement with the German ambassador. Characteristically he even then concealed from the Commons some of the most important clauses of the agreement.

The date is possibly of tragic significance (it was two days after the Archduke's murder). For the fear was always present in the minds of the diplomats of Paris and Petersburg that an Anglo-German agreement over the Bagdad railway might be the first step towards an understanding which would draw England away from her partners, make her a dubious ally, perhaps even break up the Entente and produce a new—and for them unfavourable—European grouping.

How far Sazonoff's knowledge of the Anglo-German negotiation and his fear of its possible consequence determined his policy in the summer of 1914—how far they account for his insistent effort to draw England into accepting more definite obligations, for his demand—furtively conceded by Grey—for an Anglo-Russian naval convention, for his grim determination in the last ten days to face the risk of war and to drag England into it if it came—these are matters on which one can only speculate. But there is at least the possibility of truth in the tragic paradox that the movement towards an Anglo-German understanding was a powerful factor in precipitating the Anglo-German war.

The Grey-Lichnowsky agreement, initialled in June, 1914, but never signed, became of course a scrap of paper two months later. But it is none the less a significant document, and some of its clauses became important in the later diplomacy.

Its main provisions were these. The railway was to be built by the German group as far as Basra. From Basra to the Gulf the line was to be British. Two British directors were to go on to the

German board. The ports of Basra and Bagdad were to be equipped and exploited by mixed companies (Anglo-German-Turkish). The river navigation was to be Anglo-Turkish. The Willcocks irrigation scheme was not to be opposed by the Germans. Finally—and in this clause the oil of Mosul definitely enters diplomatic society—a concession of all Mesopotamian and Mosul oil rights for a long terms of years was to be granted to a new concern called the Turkish Petroleum Company, in which the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was to hold 50 per cent. of the shares, the Anglo-Saxon Company (a Shell-Royal Dutch subsidiary) 25 per cent. and the Deutsche Bank 25 per cent.

Certainly it was a good bargain from the British Imperialist point of view. It entrenched Great Britain firmly in Lower Mesopotamia, it gave her the lion's share of the hypothetical oil and the less hypothetical irrigation profits, it gave her a voice in the management of the Bagdad Railway. Germany had conceded very much, willing no doubt to pay heavily for the political implications of an Anglo-German agreement which ignored France and Russia.

But two months later the whole arrangement went sky high, and British policy had to be swiftly re-orientated to meet the possibilities of a war in which Turkey was sure sooner or later to be implicated. Diplomacy—as Sir Edward Grey boasts—worked hard and effectively to delay that entry until we were ready. Troops were hurried from Bombay to the Gulf. Turkey did not declare war until October 29. On November 7 the expeditionary force landed at the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab. The campaign which was to lead to Kut and Mosul, to Baku and the Caspian, had opened.

Officially the purpose of the landing was to guard the Anglo-Persian pipe line, which runs only a few miles from the old Turco-Persian frontier. But in August Sir Edward Grey had already begun to talk of the partition of Asia Minor. And there is little question that from the beginning it was in many minds that at last the opportunity had come for acquiring the whole of Mesopotamia.

In the spring of 1915 came Russia's demand for the annexation of Constantinople, the shores of the Straits and a large slice of Asia Minor ; and at once we replied that in the event of any division of the Turkish dominions Mesopotamia and the " neutral " zone of Persia must be regarded as in the British sphere. France was

putting in her "historical" claim to a Syria with ambitiously elastic borders. And the Secret Treaty with Russia left England and France to settle among themselves the partition of the spoils that would remain when the Tsar's appetite had been sated. Later Italy had to be promised Adalia, Smyrna and the Aidin Vilayet. But these did not affect the areas coveted by the Imperialists of London and Paris.

Their conflicting claims were temporarily adjusted by the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916. Britain was to get Lower Mesopotamia including Bagdad. France was to take Syria, the Adana Vilayet and a wedge of territory running up to the source of the Tigris. Between them was to be (in fulfilment of pledges given to the Arabs) an Arab state or states divided into French and British spheres of influence.

This partition left Mosul in the French sphere. But in a separate (and of course also secret) agreement between Grey and Cambon France agreed to sanction in her sphere of influence all pre-war concessions. This was intended to secure the oil rights of the Turkish Petroleum Company, the German shares in which had been contingently appropriated by the British Government. Yielding the territory, Britain was determined to keep hold of the oil.

But when the final crash of the Central Empires came, there was a significant change: Britain now showed much reluctance to give up the territory, for events had opened up new prospects, which made territorial possession more tempting than oil concessions.

Russia was in the throes of civil war and believed to be on the point of collapse. The British army was master of Mesopotamia and, after the armistice, occupied Mosul. Southern Persia was firmly held, and Dunsterville's force had pushed north to the shores of the Caspian. Batoum and Baku were in British occupation. Other columns had moved through Eastern Persia to Merv and Meshed. There were plans for seizing Khiva and Bokhara. The whole of South-Western Asia seemed to lie as a prize in the hands of British Imperialism.

If Persia were to become, in fact if not yet in name, a British dominion; if the Trans-Caucasian and possibly the Trans-Caspian states were to be under British protection, it would be absurd to give up Mosul to the French. The partition arranged in

1915 and 1916 had been rendered obsolete by the withdrawal of Russia from the plunder-game. New arrangements were necessary. Mr. Lloyd George promptly demanded that Great Britain should retain Mosul (under the newly devised system of "mandates") and that Palestine (which by the Sykes-Picot agreement was to be internationalised) should come under British administration—or mandate.

Let me emphasise again that this was a demand for territory, not a demand for oil fields. The oil concessions were safeguarded. Mr. Lloyd George was even willing to concede some of them to France. But he wanted the Mosul territory to round off the great area of Irak and Persia, and complete the new westward extension of India to the Mediterranean. The Syrian coast line had perforce to be yielded to the French. But save for Syria—and Afghanistan—the whole vast territory from Egypt to the Indian frontier, from the Arabian Sea to the Caucasus, was in the hands of Great Britain, or of client chieftains. "And Afghanistan" I have written. But even Afghanistan was invaded by British columns and its capital bombed by British aeroplanes.

The definite acquisition of this new Empire was a vision to dazzle Imperialist minds. It opened up vistas of innumerable lucrative posts for the British upper and middle classes, of inimitable opportunities for profit for British capital. That it was seriously contemplated is scarcely open to question. The demand for Mosul is one item of evidence. The many millions of pounds expended in Persia (over £6,000,000 in bribes alone) under Sir Percy Cox's supervision are another. The insistence in the Mudros Armistice on the right to occupy Transcaucasia; the attack on Afghanistan; the Maxwell mission in Transcaspia; the building of strategic roads across Persia; all the signs are there. It was this gigantic plan, and not considerations of oil, which motivated Mr. George's claim to Mosul.

He succeeded: for he was in a strong bargaining position. France needed his support in Europe against President Wilson. She could but pay the price. The details of the negotiation are obscure. Clemenceau said afterwards that he had been tricked: he thought he was ceding a city and found he had ceded a province. But in any case he yielded, and the bargain was struck. The oil

part of it was finally embodied in the San Remo agreement of 1920, by which a French group, headed by the ubiquitous and international Sir Basil Zaharoff, was given the Deutsche Bank's 25 per cent. of the Turkish Petroleum Company's shares.

Between the Allies it seemed that the whole business had now been disposed of. Turkey was settled with at Sèvres. A secret agreement with the Persian Government—which in effect made Persia a British protectorate—had been signed, after the necessary financial preparation. The Middle Eastern Empire was well on the way to be made.

Within a year the whole scheme, or at any rate great and integral parts of it, collapsed.

The Afghan expedition was a muddled and disreputable failure. Russia, instead of collapsing, showed an alarming vitality. The Red Fleet controlled the Caspian. The Red Armies pushed the slender British forces out of Northern Persia. The Persians angrily repudiated the secret agreement and the minister who had signed it. The Turks equally repudiated the Treaty of Sèvres. The Kurds of Mosul rose in revolt.

It was clear that the fruit was by no means as ripe as had been supposed. The effective conquest of the new Empire would demand a tremendous and costly military effort of which Britain was now both economically and psychologically incapable. The internal situation in India was doubtful. The more level-headed soldiers—Sir Henry Wilson and Sir William Robertson, for example—were strongly opposed to the assumption of such enormous new military responsibilities. The pressure of organised Labour had compelled the cessation of the Russian campaigns.

Very reluctantly, in the face of facts, the Indian Political Department and the financial powers behind Anglo-Persian and the Lynch companies had to give way, and to admit that at least the time was not ripe for establishing King George V as the heir of Xerxes. Peace was made with the Amir. The British columns fell back from Teheran and Merv. Persia was evacuated, the great and costly military roads remaining as a reminder of the past and a warning of the future, if and when British Imperialism was again prepared for effort.

But to Irak and to Mosul we held on, stamping out the insurrections in a bloody little campaign which cost us 2,000 casualties before the tribesmen of Southern Kurdistan would realise that the "liberation" which they had been promised was merely a euphemism for British domination. The swallowing of Persia had been an afterthought, an irresistible temptation of what seemed for a moment wholly favourable circumstances. But Irak was a prize on which, as I have pointed out, we had had our eyes for upwards of half a century. Moreover, the development of our transport gave it new importance as a "stage" on the route to India. And Irak, the "politicals" and the "forward" type of soldier insisted, must imply Mosul. The old conditions of the Punjab repeated themselves. We held the river plains. To the north lay high mountainous country, inhabited by restless tribesmen, dubiously controlled by a government of uncertain strength. And a hundred miles or so across the hills, the Russian frontier.

The old fears which have haunted generations of Anglo-Indians awoke again. "The ghost of the Russian bear," Mr. Churchill cried in alarm, "comes padding across the immense fields of snow." The same deduction was drawn. Irak, like India, must have a "scientific frontier" in the mountains—a frontier which would facilitate defence and, possibly, offence. It must include not only the Mosul vilayet, but the Hakkiari district beyond. That was the first point. The second was that the Kurdish districts of Mosul flanked the Persian-Kurdish provinces between Kermanshah and Lake Urmia, and gave control of a second line of advance on Teheran and the Caspian—a notable consideration for future eventualities. The third, certainly, was the oil of Mosul itself: for if the area reverted, not to France but to Turkey, the fate of the concessions was still uncertain.

At all costs, therefore, Irak, and with Irak, Mosul, were to be held, not only for their own sakes, but as an essential strategic point on the new airway to India, and as the nucleus of that Middle Eastern Empire of which the acquisition was postponed rather than abandoned.

There followed five years of intricate diplomacy, to trace which in detail would take vastly more space than I have left. Its main lines were two—or shall I say rather that it was a diplomatic

war on two fronts? Irak and Mosul had to be held, firstly against the claims of a reviving Turkey, secondly against the growing demand at home for evacuation. The American oil offensive at Lausanne was a side-show. Using the dubious Chester concession as a weapon and the "open door" as a catchword, American diplomacy demanded for the American oil magnates a share in the possibilities of the Mosul field. Again Great Britain yielded—significantly willing again to part with the oil if she could thus ensure her grip on the territory. Half the Anglo-Persian shares in the Turkish Petroleum Company were the price paid for America's complaisance. They were duly allotted, not to Admiral Chester, his heirs and assigns, who had been so useful in the negotiation, but to a group in which the all-powerful Standard and Sinclair companies were the dominant partners.

The policy evolved for the two-fronted diplomatic war was an ingenious one. The credit for the ingenuity must presumably go to the newly-created Middle Eastern Department of the Colonial Office—which had taken over Irak from the Indian Government. Its main idea was that our occupation of Irak, and of Mosul, must be converted into a treaty obligation from which we could not, with the best will in the world, free ourselves. The mandate was insufficient; for clearly a mandate could be relinquished: whereas a binding treaty obligation must be fulfilled, however reluctantly.

The first step clearly must be to establish a government at Bagdad with which the treaty could be signed. The puppet was ready to hand. The Emir Feisal, turned out of his ephemeral "Kingdom of Syria" by the French, was looking for a job. The Cairo Conference of 1921 decided that he should be King of Irak. He came opportunely to Bagdad. Sir Percy Cox, skilled in the management of Eastern politics, did the rest. Experienced political officers collected "petitions" inviting Feisal to mount the throne. Arab leaders who opposed him were promptly jailed: opposition parties and their newspapers were suppressed: Feisal was announced to the world as the spontaneously and unanimously chosen of the people of Irak, and was duly enthroned in the presence of an adequate guard of British infantry.

The way being clear, a liberally-minded British Government declared that it was unwilling to hold Irak longer in the leading

strings of mandatism: that it purposed at once endowing it not only with its chosen King, but with a constitution: and that with the King it would conclude a Treaty by which it would undertake to help him financially, militarily and administratively for four years, at the expiration of which Irak would become a fully independent state, duly equipped with membership in the League of Nations, and Great Britain would be free of all its obligations and responsibilities.

The treaty was signed in due course: but when the newly-elected Assembly met it showed an irritating reluctance to ratify it—a reluctance overcome by the simple expedient of a hurried midnight session to which the opposition members (a majority of the whole) were by a curious accident not summoned, while popular demonstrations were dealt with in the usual manner. The obedient minority not only ratified the treaty, but added a useful rider declaring that it only did so on condition that Great Britain defended Irak's rights in Mosul in their integrity.

The British House of Commons, persuaded that it was preparing the way for rapid evacuation—though Mr. Thomas declined to give a binding pledge that we would get out at the end of the four years—added its ratification. And the Middle Eastern Department was fully armed. For in the treaty there was, as joker in the pack, that provision for the conclusion of a new treaty on its expiration, which Mr. Amery was, at the right moment, to produce as implying an obligation of honour not to desert poor King Feisal in 1928.

The evacuationists, Tory, Liberal and Labour alike, had been successfully duped by the treaty dodge. The Turks were more difficult. But they were persuaded at Lausanne to refer the question of the sovereignty of Mosul to the League Council. Whether Lord Curzon's assurance that the decision would have to be a unanimous one of a body on which Turkey would be represented was a deliberate trap, or whether it was based on genuine ignorance of the provisions of the League Covenant, must still be matter for speculation. But whatever the intention, it acted effectively as a trap. The Turks accepted, to find themselves confronted two years later with the suggestion that the fate of Mosul must be determined by the vote of a majority of the Council—a majority already assured, for various reasons, to Great Britain. But in the

meantime a brilliant piece of diplomacy, achieved by some unknown hand, had inserted into the minds, and so into the report, of the League's Commissioners, the recommendation that the treaty of 1923 should be renewed for a further period of twenty-five years. That completed the obligation of honour. The treaty bound us to assert Irak's claim to Mosul. The League said that if we did this we must stay in Irak. What could the Government do but patiently accept the decision? The evacuationists might fume. But they had been out-maneuvred all along the line. So had the Turks. But the Turk is an unreliable fellow, with a deplorable ignorance of the rules of the game. Said Soult of Beresford after Albuera, "I had pierced his centre. I had turned his flanks. I had cut his communications. By every rule I had him beaten. But he was so bad a soldier that he didn't know it." So the Turks, beaten at all points, calmly upset the table and propose starting all over again. And there the question stands at the moment—Imperialism clutching tenaciously at its prize, but still uncertain of its ability to hold it.

In this two years of post-Lausanne diplomacy the Turks have again and again declared that if England will give up territorial claims she is welcome to the oil concessions. And each time the British Government has declined even to discuss the possibility of such a sordid deal.

And so I end where I began. The claim to Mosul is not motivated primarily by the desire to obtain for British oil interests the profits of its hypothetical wells. It is part of a far more grandiose scheme, the scheme of a great Middle Eastern Empire stretching from the Indian frontier to the Mediterranean, from the Arabian Sea to the Caspian and the Caucasus. The faint beginnings of that scheme were when the East India Company began to build its factories along the Persian Gulf. The end of it is not yet. The retreat is momentary: the ambition is lasting. One may prophesy without hesitation that at least one more supreme effort will be made. It may be that Parthia will be fatal to Britain as to Rome, and that the downfall of the Empire will come in an attempt, beyond its strength, to add "the wealth of Ormuzd" to the "wealth of Ind." In that case, the struggle for Irak and Mosul will have historical importance as the beginning of the end.

THE DRIVE INTO THE FACTORIES

How to Begin

By J. T. MURPHY

“ . . . Congress further considers that strong well-organised shop committees are indispensable weapons in the struggle to force the capitalists to relinquish their grip on industry, and, therefore pledges itself to do all in its power to develop and strengthen, workshop organisation.”

THE passing of this resolution by the Scarborough Congress throws into sharp relief the change that has come over the trade union movement since the days when some of us set up “unofficial workshop committees” in the teeth of general opposition in the trade union movement. To-day, there is practically no opposition to the idea of “workshop committees.” We have not to fight either the railwaymen, the miners or any other body of industrial workers on behalf of the “principle,” as we had to fight in the war period. There are not many trade unions which have not in some way or other attempted to adapt themselves to this principle. Miners have put forward their schemes of pit committees and worked the theme into schemes for the democratic control of their industry. So have railwaymen, builders and the like as well as the engineers. The ground is then well prepared so far as the unions are concerned. But there is just one fly in the ointment—Unemployment.

This word sums up the opposition to-day. The spectre of unemployment haunts the minds of many active trade unionists who would be well pleased to translate their activities into workshop organisation were it not for the fact that they know, if they make themselves prominent in the workshop, they will be cleared out exactly as the majority of those who led the workshop committees in the “unofficial” days were cleared out with the first slump in trade. That unemployment and the fears arising from it are

tremendous factors in the armoury of the employers it would be folly to ignore. It is because I do recognise these factors that I welcome the decision of the Trades Union Congress. In my opinion it paves the way as nothing else could to the defeat of the fears and the solution of many other questions now tormenting the movement.

This is not a freshly formed opinion on my part by any means. In *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* for January, 1922, I wrote:—

The conditions which made possible the rapid development of factory committees are gone. To get such organisations we require a sense of power and a degree of stability in the position of the workers, derived either from strength of organisation or the abolition of unemployment, as in the war period . . .

After supporting the re-affiliation of the Trades Councils to the T.U. Congress I went on to say :—

The Congress nationally, and the Trades Councils locally, should be immediately reinforced with delegates from the unemployed committees, and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress ought to have within its ranks a direct representative of the National Administrative Committee of the Unemployed. We cannot allow a movement thriving on bitter poverty to create a cleavage in the working class when a united mass movement is within easy reach the moment we are prepared to demonstrate in deeds that we mean business on this question. Such a move is as sound in principle as in tactics. Massing the organisations is a source of strength. Unity of action is essential in policy. By these means we regain strength to initiate once again an organisational drive into the factories.

Since I wrote these lines, remarkable changes have taken place in the development of the trade union apparatus. The General Council of the T.U.C. is now a more powerful body and has greater prestige than ever before. There is an organised Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement working in close alliance with the General Council. The Trades Councils have been re-awakened and brought within the purview and direction of the General Council. There is a more powerful will toward unity of action and organisation than at any previous time. All these factors together present us, therefore, with an entirely new situation for the approach of the workers to the application of the Congress decision. For the first time in the history of the unions the way is clear for a concentrated drive of the organised workers into the factories. And at no time has there been a more urgent need for such a drive.

Let us see. What are the outstanding needs of the trade union movement? First, to recruit the ten million workers eligible for membership. Where is the main line of approach to these ten million? At their work in factories, mills, mines, &c. Second, to unite the workers in common defence against the attacks now being prepared against them. Where must this unity find expression to be of any avail? In the factories, mills, mines, &c. Third, to eliminate the confused muddle of union organisation and establish organisation by industry for the purpose of exercising control in industry. How can this be brought about other than by mass pressure expressing itself in organised form in the mills, mines and factories which are to be controlled? Any real attempt to tackle a single leading issue before the unions points us at once to the problem of workshop organisation.

This statement of the position in the form of question and answer is not simply a theoretical statement to be proved in experience at a later date. The questions have been put before and the answers are on record. Who were the greatest recruiting agents in the heyday of trade union recruiting during the war years and immediately afterwards, other than the shop stewards? Who overcame the divisions and antagonisms of the unions in the factories more effectively than the shop stewards through their workshop committees? While it is beyond dispute that they were responsible for bringing the whole question of the ways and means of exercising control in industry to the forefront of trade union experience.

On all these questions, therefore, there is a vast amount of experience from which we can draw. It is true that unemployment is still with us, but it is beyond question that against unemployment as a factor retarding the efforts to create workshop and factory committees can be set a number of advantages hitherto absent. There is no question of an unofficial shop stewards movement competing with the union apparatus. The circumstances which fully justified such a movement during the war are non-existent to-day. The unions are not tied to the State as they were then, but are free to function as instruments of the workers' struggle.

They are not only free to struggle, but possess a greater degree of centralisation and co-ordination of activities than at any previous

time. The leading features of this process having been mentioned there is no need for me to emphasise them further. It is sufficient to say that the position of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress in relation to the Unemployed Workers' Committees and the Trades Councils places the whole trade union movement in an exceedingly favourable position to carry out the decision of the Scarborough Congress.

I propose, therefore, to outline, on the basis of my own experience in the shop stewards movement, how I think the Congress decision can be effectively applied. The initiative should come from the General Council of the T.U.C. and its sub-committee of Trades Councils. Not that these bodies are the only people concerned, but they are in a position to prevent sporadic and sectional efforts which would simply break themselves against victimisation. Both need, of course, the complete co-operation of the trade union executives, and this ought not to be difficult to obtain if they are at all intent upon defending their own interests.

To illustrate this permit me to recall the manner in which we overcame this phase of the problem in 1916. At that time I was a member of the A.S.E. District Committee in Sheffield. It was through this committee that the first move was made, paving the way to the workshop and factory committees in that district. The A.S.E. constitution at that time provided for shop stewards, but there were very few actually functioning. The District Committee decided on an attempt to alter this state of affairs. An agitation was begun in the branches of the union which rapidly spread to other unions. This was followed by a complete registration of the members as to the place of occupation. This was done through the branches.

Meanwhile a set of instructions to shop stewards were drafted and submitted to the Executive Committee and approved. The instructions were simple and clear. They dealt with—show of pence cards, recruiting members, reporting and dealing with grievances, and included the proposal to co-operate with other trade unions in the workshop to maintain the conditions agreed upon by the unions. It should be clearly understood that there was no question of "joint committees" for the interpretation of trade union rules, but the application of the trade union agreements.

This paved the way at once for other unions to take up the question of shop stewards in a similar way and provide for co-operation in the workshops, and the only possible form in which the co-operation could express itself was in the formation of workshop and factory committees. I think there are but few important unions that have no provision in their rules for shop stewards or shop delegates. It should be no great task on the part of the executives of the unions to co-operate with the General Council in facilitating this process to-day.

But this is only one phase of the problem. In the case I have cited the initiative was in the hands of the District Committees of the unions and not the Trades Councils. This throws into relief at once a situation which threatens to become more confused unless immediate steps are taken by the local organs of trade unionism.

At the present moment we have not only the local centres of the unions, *i.e.*, the District Committees, unco-ordinated, but the projected scheme of a quadruple alliance must have its local expression as well as its national. And this comes on the scene just at the time when the Trades Councils have assumed much greater prominence, and under the leadership of the General Council are awakening to a sense of their responsibilities to the struggle in industry. The moment is, therefore, opportune, even as the problem is pressing, for a clearing up of the situation.

To get the workshop and factory committees we need much more than propaganda from the Trades Councils to be effective. As they stand at the present, they do not possess the authority to establish anything effectively in the factories. A first essential in this respect is the co-operation of the District Committees of the unions. This I think can be secured if the plan of the General Council to apply the Congress resolution includes within it, besides the co-operation of the union executives, the convening of conferences of the Trades Councils with the District Committees of the unions to consider how best to pursue common action and centralise in the Trades Councils the power expressed in the conferences.

It is time the District Committees of the unions were definitely affiliated to the Trades Councils so that when the councils speak they do so with the full authority of the unions affiliated. With the union representation grouped in the Trades Councils in the same

manner as they are grouped in the General Council, the way would be clear for making more effective the joint activities of the General Council and the Trades Councils. At the same time it would prevent the overlapping and possible rivalry of the Quadruple Alliance machinery by bringing it at once into the apparatus of the Trades Councils.

The advantages in these directions could be elaborated further, but here I wish to stress the urgency of the co-operation between the Trades Councils and the District Committees of the unions for the united drive into the factories. I am convinced that it is essential to give every member of the union the consciousness of the united backing of the whole of the union machinery to gain the confidence necessary to carry out the work of the workshop committees. We do not want the situation to arise that the Trades Councils take the initiative and the district organs of the unions deny responsibility and leave their members stranded, or that the same District Committees attempting to carry out the Congress decisions only find themselves deserted by the Trades Councils and the other unions who do nothing. That is the way to demoralise the workers and give the employers the full benefit of the demoralising effect of unemployment. A concerted effort from the beginning is the best guarantee of success and the surest weapon against victimisation.

With such a beginning the next steps are clear—from experience. Under the direction of the Trades Councils and the District Committees the whole machinery of the unions should be set to work to summon meetings of all workers in each workshop and factory in the district. These meetings should elect the shop committee on which each union should be represented. The committee that is elected should be endorsed by the Trades Council, whose endorsement should be supported by every union concerned. It may be argued that each union should meet separately to elect their particular representative. I am confident, however, that if this course is adopted it will only accentuate union divisions instead of liquidating them. A full shop meeting, including even the non-unionists, secures the full confidence of the shop to every member of the committee and facilitates the recruiting of members into the

unions as nothing else can. It is not only the way to 100 per cent. confidence, but to 100 per cent. unionism.

This is the method we adopted in the Sheffield district during the war period, and I venture to say there was no district better organised both from the standpoint of the trade unions or the workshop committees ; and at that time we were not supported by the Trades Council. It is true that the movement was then confined to the engineering industry. But the experiences in this industry are experiences in an industry where there are probably more unions and more confusion than in any other. To overcome these difficulties, as we did overcome them, gives us confidence in the application of the same methods in less difficult circumstances, especially after the general acceptance of the principle of workshop organisation.

The chief problem is that of a united effort of the unions to carry out the Congress decision that is accepted as a most pressing question of the day, both for recruiting, establishing unity of action and overcoming the sectionalism of the unions. The above proposals based upon our experience of workshop organisation are put forward as a contribution to the solution of the difficulties the trade union movement has got to face.

Unprecedented pressure on our space compels us to hold over till next month articles on LANGUAGE AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT and on LABOUR RESEARCH.

The World of Labour

	PAGE
INTERNATIONAL: L.S.I. Congress	699
TRADE UNION UNITY: Anglo-Russian Report	701

INTERNATIONAL

L.S.I. Congress

THE Second Congress of the Labour and Socialist International opened on August 22 at Marseilles. Four hundred and twenty-six delegates were present from the affiliated parties, and in addition there were fraternal representatives from the I.F.T.U. and the International Labour Office. The constituent parties number forty-four, of which three are American and two Asiatic. The total membership is estimated at seven millions, and their total electoral support exceeds twenty-five millions of votes.

The political section of the report, which covers the activities of the International since its foundation two years ago, shows clearly the rôle which it attempts to fill. As the L.S.I. official *International Information* sums up:—

How the claims of the workers, at first put forward in seemingly fruitless resolutions and disregarded, were impressed little by little on the public mind till they have been finally recognised even by adversaries as the only path towards the solution of the great problems of international politics; how these claims, some brought to fulfilment, others still left unheard, must ever and again be pressed home with renewed tenacity—all this tells of an achievement in the service of the proletariat which far surpasses the manœuvres of Moscow.

This quotation gives a good idea of the spirit in which the parties, with their 1,022 parliamentary representatives, including numerous ministers and ex-ministers, have worked, at any rate in theory.

The full results of the policy of gradualism and parliamentary opportunism, enunciated in Mr. Henderson's opening address, can only be appreciated by a study of the records of the individual parties, but some indication was given during the Congress. Perhaps the most important part of the presidential address was a benediction on the policy of participation in Coalition Governments, which had been rather frowned upon so recently as at the Hamburg Congress of the L.S.I.

He recognised to the full the difficult problem involved in the transition from Capitalist to Socialist government in the world at large. In the transition stage, the problem appeared to be one of minority government or coalition. Minority Governments and Coalition Governments . . . were viewed with very great suspicion and distrust by a considerable section of their movement. Many stalwarts among them seemed to wish to raise this question to the plane of

principle. . . . In his judgment (and he spoke only for himself on this point) this method of approach would lead them to endless barren controversy upon a question which, for all practical purposes, settled itself as a question of expediency in each country where it arose.

The first discussion, on "Peace Policy," dealt almost entirely with the question of the "Pact of Security," and resolved itself into a dispute on national lines between the French and Germans on the one hand and the British on the other.

The discussions on unemployment revealed even more clearly this divergence on nationalist grounds. A British proposal cited the payment of reparations as a major cause of unemployment, and condemned the policy. The Belgian and French delegations opposed this view, and acrimonious discussions followed.

On the colonial question, the commission decided to postpone a decision until the next Congress. The complexity of the problem, declared M. Piérard (Belgium), rendered any summary doctrinaire solution untenable at present, when it is necessary to reconcile the rights of the native populations with the needs of the great industrial States, whose prosperity depends on the use of a colonial empire, as the situation of Germany shows. All Socialists are, indeed, agreed in recognising that it was iniquitous and absurd to take away Germany's colonies.

The burning question of the Morocco war was dealt with on the last day, without discussion. The resolution demands "immediate action to restore peace." The peace terms of France and Spain are to be published, and communicated to the Riffs, and their answer is required. Peace terms must include Spanish recognition of Riffian independence, and such drawing of frontiers as shall enable the Riffs to obtain food. As in all other cases, we are left to assume that parliamentary action will be used to enforce these demands.

The "Eastern question" (*i.e.*, the attitude towards Soviet Russia) occupied more of the time and attention of the Congress than perhaps any other subject, and the greatest difficulty was found in reconciling the views of the different sections, which varied from militant counter-revolution in Tchernoff (Russia—Socialist Revolutionary) and the Polish and Roumanian Socialist parties, to the modified sympathy which the British, Austrian, and other delegates had to assume. The resolution finally agreed to opposes aggression upon Russia, but declares that the Congress,

realising that the danger of war would be considerably diminished if any Soviet decision concerning European peace were in the hands, not of a dictatorship, but of the people, supports the endeavours of the Socialist parties of Russia to democratise the Soviet régime and establish political liberty.

An argument brought forward by Otto Bauer (Austria), to restrain the counter-revolutionary enthusiasts, is of interest. In the words of the *Manchester Guardian's* report, he

argued that the development of capitalism in Russia was drawing political changes inevitably, and that the International's attitude should be not merely critical of Communism, but should be one of helpfulness to these liberalising tendencies.

This, apart from organisational and other minor questions, and a resolution in favour of the ratification of the Washington Agreement on the eight-hour day, concluded the business of the Congress.

M. Charles Dulot, the well-known Labour correspondent of *Le Temps*, in reporting the discussion on the colonial question for that journal (29/8/25), wrote :—

The Congress has thus ended with this final manifestation of the tendency which is forcing the International to adapt itself to economic, if not to Socialist, realities.

TRADE UNION UNITY

Anglo-Russian Report

THE Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council met on September 17, after the Trades Union Congress at Scarborough, and in the light of its ratification of the Agreement decided upon in April, published a report. After recalling that both responsible bodies have now ratified the decisions, and emphasising the previous joint pronouncements on the need for unity, it proceeds:—

The industrial and economic situation, aggravated by the Dawes plan in most of the countries, has become worse since the beginning of this year. Unemployment is world-wide in its effects and is steadily increasing. The attacks of the employing class on the workers' hours and wages become more and more definite and deliberate.

Parallel with the growth of economic reaction, the political situation has become more and more reactionary and obstructive to working-class interests. In the various parts of Europe reactionary groups of capitalists are obtaining more and more power and leadership in the policy of the State. The danger of war is becoming nearer and more evident. The Anglo-Russian Conference last April, in the following words, expressed the situation as it had developed up to that time: "Already it would appear that a new war, more terrible, more monstrous than hitherto, is being prepared."

These words still preserve and maintain their full force. Already in Morocco, in Syria, in China, the thunder of warfare is giving evidence of the justice of this warning. War is being waged upon the Riffs in Morocco, and upon the Arabs in Syria, while the Chinese workers and peasants revolting against exploitation and usurpation are held down by armed force. This is making clear to all workers of the world the insincerity of the lofty professions of peace made by capitalist statesmen.

The Guarantee Pact places upon Germany the duty of using sanctions (military and economic penalties) against the States unwilling to submit to the League of Nations. The object of this is to include Germany in a military alliance directed against the U.S.S.R. (Soviet Russia). This would make Germany a constant menace to Soviet Russia, and at the same time would create in Germany a strategical base for any projected attack upon the Soviet Republics.

The establishment of an all-inclusive world-wide Trade Union International has therefore become more necessary than ever. The world-wide and active sympathy aroused by the creation of the Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council amongst the workers of all countries is an unmistakable proof of the justice and correctness of the line taken by the Anglo-Russian Conference, of the practical proposals adopted, and of the inevitable success of the cause of national and international trade union unity. The Joint Advisory Council,

prompted by the firm desire ardently expressed by more than 11,000,000 British and Russian workers, appeals to the workers of every country, to their organisations and leaders, to join their efforts with the British and Russian trade union movements, in order to secure the removal of all obstacles and difficulties in the way of national and international working-class unity, and to help them to bring into existence one all-inclusive world-wide federation of trade unions.

On behalf of the All-Russian Trade Union Council—M. TOMSKY.

On behalf of the British Trades Union Congress General Council—
FRED BRAMLEY.

This pronouncement, in conjunction with the renewed and increased enthusiasm for unity displayed at the British Trades Union Congress, has drawn angry comments from the opponents of unity. Thus the *I.F.T.U. Press Reports* (No. 37, October 1, 1925), under the heading "Not the Right Way to Unity," severely rebuke the General Council. Recalling that the Congress ignored the decisions of the National Minority Movement, it declares :—

Internationally, on the other hand, the British have, so to speak, proposed a pact with those minority movements and dissidents which, very much to the disadvantage of the whole Trade Union Movement, have seceded from their respective national centres.

It concludes with what can only be regarded as a threat of a new split :—

Nevertheless, they have continued their campaign for the Russian conception of the unity question with so much zeal that occasionally they seem in their eagerness to have come very near overstepping the bounds of loyalty to the I.F.T.U. and its affiliated national centres. In their anxiety to force the Continental unions to their own way of thinking, the British comrades seem to overlook the fact that their action, instead of leading to greater unity, may only cause further secessions. It seems highly improbable that the Continental unions will allow themselves to be influenced by the peculiar form of radicalism which has so suddenly developed among the British trade unions.

Similarly the Berlin *Vorwärts* (September 29, 1925), in an article on the Anglo-Russian statement, headed "A Shameful Document: the English Trade Unions as the Agents of Russian Foreign Policy," concludes:—

With the latest document, however, the British trade union representatives have allowed themselves to be tricked by the Russians into a position which makes it impossible for the International Trade Union Movement to keep silent on the subject. It is now time for the rest of the trade unions organised in the Amsterdam International to repudiate the British attitude in no uncertain terms, because we have ample grounds for stating that the members of the British General Council are no longer conscious how far by their friendship with the Russians they have alienated themselves from their colleagues on the Continent.

The *Manchester Guardian* (October 5, 1925) received enthusiastically the I.F.T.U. statement which is quoted above, with the comment :—

The campaign for international trade union unity that seemed to go so swimmingly at Scarborough has now turned against the Russians. . . . Everything points to the end of this blind co-operation of the General Council with the Russians having been reached.

The *Times* (October 5, 1925) also gave great prominence to what it called "Sharp Amsterdam Criticism."

A Pamphlet every worker should read :

"The Burning Question of International Unity"

By A. A. PURCELL

1d. each, 9d. per dozen, or 5s. 6d. per 100 from—

"Labour Monthly," 162 Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1.

THE COMMUNIST BOOKSHOP,

16 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2

is the largest and most efficient Labour book-selling agency in the country. Call and inspect the wide range of stock or send for a copy of the new catalogue. Mail orders a speciality.

The Arcos Steamship Co., Ltd.

Weekly Sailings—

From LONDON TO LENINGRAD

Monthly Sailings—

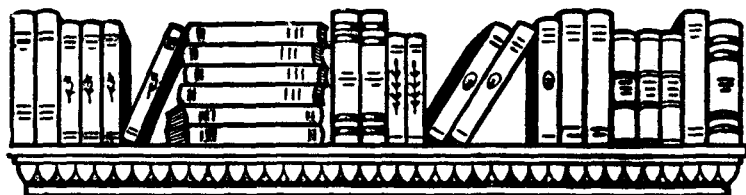
**From LIVERPOOL TO BLACK SEA PORTS
(BATUM, NOVOROSIISK and ODESSA)**

For passenger fares and freight rates apply to :

The ARCOS S.S. Co., Ltd.

Beatley House

MASON'S AVENUE, COLEMAN ST., E.C.2



TO EDITORS

PUTTING YOUR PAPER TO BED is a task which will be all the lighter if you are certain of the co-operation of your printer. Comfortable editorial accommodation, telephone facilities, careful reading, reliable craftsmanship, despatch to schedule, are our contribution to the journals we print. We are able to consider the production of one or two more weekly and monthly papers. Our plant and experience are

ALWAYS AT YOUR SERVICE

*In your first communication to us
please mention "The Labour Monthly."*

LONDON
Caledonian Press Ltd.

TRADE UNION IN ALL DEPARTMENTS

W. FRANCIS MOSS, *Managing Director*

74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
London, W.C. 1

Telegrams: Edcalopres, Kincros, London

Telephone: Museum 1311
Museum 7777



Published by the proprietors, the Trinity Trust, 162 Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1, and Printed by
THE LONDON CALEDONIAN PRESS LTD., 74 Swinton Street, W.C. 1.—W10667